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The Dickens Fellowship

Annual Conference

(Please Note Change of Arrangements)

SATURDAY, July 7th, 1945

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Application may be made to the Hon. Secretary, 7 Lyme Terrace, London, N.W.1, not later than June 30th.

London Summer Meetings see page iii of cover.

SPECIAL NOTICE . . .

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The Hon. Secretary, 7 Lyme Terrace, London, N.W.1.

The Bedford address is no longer in use.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

LONDON MEETINGS

Arranged by Mrs. Jane Bacon.

June 9—A wreath will be laid on the grave of Charles Dickens in Westminster Abbey, at 10.30 a.m.

July 7—Annual Conference—see page ii of cover.

Aug. 11—"The City of the Absent." Conducted by Lt.-Col. W. M. H. Spiller. Meet at Blackfriars (District) Station at 2.30 p.m.

Sept. 8—"From Coavinses to the Fleet." Conducted by Mr. Geo. F Young. Meet at Chancery Lane Station at 2.30 p.m.

THE DICKENSIAN

Index, Title-page and Frontispiece

to

VOLUME 40, 1944

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Illustrations for *Great Expectations*
by E. Budogosky
(See *When Found*—)

THE DICKENSIAN

Vol. XLI 1st JUNE, 1945 No. 275

WHEN FOUND—

Safe! With the triumphant conclusion of the war in the West, it is with thankfulness that we record the emergence of The Dickens House from the vicissitudes of the last five and a half years, complete and unscathed. With severe damage in the neighbourhood on all sides, inflicted at all stages of the war, the immunity of the house is indeed cause for profound thankfulness. It is hoped that we may soon plan its rehabilitation and reopening. This will prove to be no small matter and will depend upon the solution of a number of knotty problems, all of which, however, fade into insignificance beside the fact that this National Monument to Charles Dickens, established at the cost of so much toil and enthusiasm, is safe. With the coming of peace, the "Walter Dexter Memorial Fund" will be casting a wider net and plans made for its ultimate success as a badly-needed "Endowment Fund of the Dickens House."

* * * * *

Gadshill too. There is good news also of Gadshill Place. When Mr. Oliver D. Savage lectured there some time ago to an audience of the occupying W.R.E.N.s he had an opportunity of observing that the house is in admirable condition despite its prolonged war service. The dining room has been temporarily converted into a cabin (in landlubbing parlance, a dormitory) and the drawing-room into a recreation room. The famous study with its familiar fittings has been sealed since the requisitioning and is intact. Miss Burt, the headmistress of the school which at that time occupied the house, appealed to the Dickens Fellowship in the early days of the war, to petition the Admiralty that this historic room should be closed throughout the naval occupation, a course that was immediately agreed to. The tunnel which Dickens constructed in order that he might reach in privacy his chalet-study in the "Wilderness" on the opposite side of the Dover Road, has been used as an air-raid shelter.

* * * * *

A Constant Friend. The Dickens Fellowship, the Dickens House, and this magazine have had no more staunch friend than the distinguished Dickensian student and collector, the Count de Suzannet. His great knowledge has ever been at our disposal and it is difficult adequately to express our gratitude for his constant and considerable generosity. The editor was recently reminded of his emotion when, in the dark first winter of the war, he suddenly succeeded the late S. J. Rust as Honorary Secretary, the Count sent his good wishes to mark the occasion, accompanied by a substantial donation to the funds of the financially-stricken Dickens House. Now, as we begin to gather up the editorial reins, placed in our hands through a similarly sudden stroke of an implacable fate, the Count sends his good wishes once again, expresses his confidence in the future of the magazine in terms which modesty prevents us from quoting and sends a handsome donation to its funds. A friend indeed. His sympathetic and practical encouragement is acknowledged with pride and gratitude.

* * * * *

More Soviet Art. The illustration from a Soviet edition of *Pickwick Papers* which we reproduced in the December Number aroused so much interest that we have been prompted to present further examples of modern Russian illustrations of Dickens. Our

frontispiece consists of two wood engravings from an edition of *Great Expectations* published in 1935 by the State Publishing Department of Juvenile Literature for senior students. They betray a similar happy inspiration to that apparent in the very different medium used in the *Pickwick*. That these artists can thus faithfully express the spirit of an author so foreign to them is indeed a remarkable achievement and argues a great sympathy with his work. We are again indebted to Mezdhunatodnaya Kniga for special permission to reprint.

* * * * *

The Cellar at Gadshill. A further interesting article has been contributed to "Wine and Food" by Dame Una Pope-Hennessy, this time on the contents of Dickens's wine cellar at Gadshill, based upon the catalogue of the sale in 1870. It would seem that he especially favoured Rhine and Moselle wines, an excellent knowledge of which he gained from Josef Valckenberg, a vintner with whom he stayed in Worms. In the sale there figured Johannisberger Hock, Kupferberg Sparkling Moselle and Zeltinger Schlossberg. Burgundies also found great favour with the novelist, such as Clos Vougeot, Volnay and Chambertin, There was Brane-Mouton (which would now be labelled Mouton-Rothschild), Château Yquem and other choice clarets. Champagnes were represented by the famous name of Bouzy and others, and there was no lack of sherry, port and spirits. But the eye of the reader who remembers the convivial scenes in the novels is at once caught by an item of twelve dozen of Milk Punch by Ballard of Broadstairs and, even more perhaps, by five dozen of Pineapple Rum. We mercifully refrain from teasing readers by quoting prices.

* * * * *

Jaggers. The reference in the last number to the death of Sir George Lewis, brought an interesting letter from Sir William H. Champness, pointing out inaccuracies in our note which had been derived from the daily press and from an article by the late Sir Edward Clarke, K.C. Sir William, who writes that he spent thirteen years in the Ely Place offices of the famous firm, informs us that there has been a George Lewis in no less than four generations of the family and that if, in describing Jaggers, Dickens had one of them in mind, it must have been the first, who practised at the time *Great Expectations* was being written. But Sir William disagrees with Sir Edward Clarke in connecting the family with the character at all. The type of practice was totally dissimilar from that of Jaggers and the well-known Ely Place offices quite unlike those of Jaggers.

* * * * *

Landladies. It would be difficult to find a really new subject for an anthology, but Philip Owens appears to have done so in his "Bed and Sometimes Breakfast." It is "Landladies." A great many of the species from the seventeenth century to our own times are brought to mind and those of Dickens have special attention: Mrs. Lirriper, Mrs. MacStinger, Mrs. Bardell, Mrs. Raddle and Mrs. Todgers. We have not seen the book, but hope the one and only Billickin is not overlooked.

* * * * *

Dickens on the Montreal Stage. Mr. Andrew Paterson, whose articles on the dramatic performances in which Dickens appeared in 1842 at Montreal will be remembered, has written a further article which appeared in the "Montreal Gazette" on February 12th, prompted by the novelist's speech at the Royal General Theatrical Fund Festival in 1863, which we reprinted for the first time in the December number. In that speech Dickens relates how, when he was acting in Canada, young officers were called upon to appear as actresses and to have their feet tied together to enable them to simulate

a feminine gait. As far as is known at present there were only two performances, both at Montreal. At the first, a private one, the women's rôles were undertaken by Mrs. Dickens and the wives of the officers of the garrison and at the second by well-known professional actresses. Was there a third performance, as yet undiscovered, and at which an "all male" cast appeared? We trust Mr. Paterson will be able to solve this interesting problem. If it can be done, he is certainly the man to do it.

* * * * *

Friends of the Dickens House. Our attention has been drawn to an error on page 107 of the last issue. The Friends of the Dickens House came into being at the Bath Conference of 1939 and not after the commencement of the war. The error is due to the fact that after the initial subscriptions were gathered at Bath in June, the outbreak of war intervened before the scheme could be established. We tender our apologies, but are none the less grateful for the opportunity of again referring to this worthy cause. While on the subject of errors, yet another must be admitted. The final quotation on page 98 does not of course describe the French visitor, but the nameless though memorable would-be linguist.

* * * * *

John Dickens, Bibliophile. Mr. W. Glanville Mason called attention recently in the "Chatham News" to the interesting fact that among the subscribers to the second edition of "The History of Rochester," Wildash, 1817, figures the name of "Mr. John Dickens of Chatham," father of the novelist.

* * * * *

And now in the air. We have long been familiar with the custom of giving the names of Dickens characters to ships of all kinds, but it must now be recorded that the practice has spread to the air. A Mosquito force in Italy was known as "The Flying Micawbers."

* * * * *

Filming the novels. Considerable censure has been invoked in the past upon film producers who have embarked upon the transcription of Dickens's books for the screen, but readers will be most interested in Mr. John Croydon's article in the present number, which clearly demonstrates the immense pains taken by modern studios to insure the faithful representation of an author's work.

* * * * *

Another Railway Centenary. A few weeks ago the line from Gravesend to Strood celebrated its centenary. It runs through Higham Station which Dickens used when at Gadshill and a portion of the line in that vicinity is depicted in the well-known ghostly little story "The Signalman."

* * * * *

The *Carol* by Marionettes. Enthusiastic reports reach us of a production of *A Christmas Carol* on a marionette stage which is presented by the Lilliput Puppet Theatre Group. Performances have been given in the Midlands and it is hoped that it may be seen later in London. A stage is used with a proscenium opening no less than sixteen feet by ten feet. The play takes nearly two hours to perform and entails the use of fourteen marionettes, carved in wood by Edward G. Hellawell, A.R.C.A., who has also designed the sets and produced the play.

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At Dover. No. 10 Camden Crescent, Dover, where Dickens stayed in 1852, is being demolished, following damage caused by enemy action in September, 1940. LESLIE C. STAPLES.

HUNT—SKIMPOLE*

By T. W. HILL

PART I—LEIGH HUNT

I

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT, whose personality lingers with a fondly remembered fragrance from the early nineteenth century, was Dickens's senior by twenty-eight years. In his Autobiography, rather discursive but elegantly written and very readable, he talks about his ancestry from Tory Cavaliers and Irish Kings, which one cannot help suspecting to be romance, and says that on his mother's side his progenitors "seem all sailors and rough subjects with a mitigation on the female part of Quakerism, as on the father's side they were all creoles and claret drinkers very polite and clerical," which sounds more credible, for his father, Isaac Hunt, began as a lawyer in Philadelphia and married an American wife. During the American Rebellion he espoused the British cause and had to flee to England where he entered the Church, then became a bankrupt and was lodged in the King's Bench Prison for debt and finally settled in Southgate where he established a school and also became the tutor to James Henry Leigh, a nephew of the Duke of Chandos.

At Southgate in 1784 the subject of this paper was born and, by the Duke's desire, was named after his father's favourite pupil James Henry Leigh, but he always dropped in after life the first two names. The house, Eagle Hall, was in former days called, in honour of the man who was born there, Leigh Hall; it has lately been demolished after being badly damaged by enemy action during the recent war.

The boy was sent to Christ's Hospital (the Blue-Coat School) then in Newgate Street, in 1792, where his chief characteristic seems to have been his faculty for friendship, extending in spite of his retiring disposition and romantic nature, even to the usual boyish fights on behalf of his friends. He received a good grounding in the classics, hated mathematics and arithmetic, and his private reading was almost exclusively poetry. Spenser, Thomson and Gray were his favourites: "Pope I admired," he says, "more than I loved; Milton was above me, and the only play of Shakespeare's with which I was conversant was Hamlet."

Like Charles Lamb, another Blue-Coat boy, Hunt left school before becoming a Grecian and for the same reason. A Grecian is a senior boy who may be destined for the Church, and both Lamb and Hunt were debarred from such a career by an impediment in the speech; in Lamb's case a decided stutter, but in Hunt's only a slight stammer—a hesitancy, but enough to be a handicap to a parson. Though their school days did not overlap as Lamb had left three years before Hunt entered, in after years they became great friends.

During his time at Christ's Hospital Hunt wrote verses, of which more presently. On leaving, "I surprised my school-fellows and the masters with the melancholy of tears. I took leave of my books, of my friends, of my seat in the grammar-school, of my good-hearted nurse and her daughter, of my bed, of the cloisters, of the very pump out of which I had taken so many delicious draughts, as if I should never see them again . . . the fatal hat was put on (Blue-Coat boys, as you know, never wear their caps); my father was come to fetch me."

Hunt had already taken a prize for a translation from Horace and had written a little pamphlet entitled "Retirement, or the Golden Mean: a Political Essay," and a year later, in 1801, a collection

* A paper read before the Dickens Fellowship, London, April 7th, 1945.

"Poems written between the ages of twelve and sixteen" was published by subscription. He says with characteristic modesty, "the book was unfortunately successful everywhere, particularly in the metropolis."

II

After leaving school, Leigh Hunt did not settle down at home; he became a wanderer and a visitor at his friends' homes and a Bohemian he remained all his life; he visited, among others, a Mr. and Mrs. Kent, caught St. Anthony's Fire, stayed with them some weeks having himself nursed, fell in love with one of the daughters (Marianne) and was engaged; she was then thirteen and he was seventeen. He says: "I had never ceased to be ready to fall in love with the first tender-hearted damsel that should encourage me. Now it was a fair charmer; now a girl who sang; or a girl who danced; now one that was merry, or was melancholy, or seemed to care for nothing, or everything, or was a good friend, or a good sister, or good daughter. With this last, who completed her conquest by reading verses better than I had ever yet heard, I ultimately became wedded for life."

A clerkship in his lawyer brother's office for a few months was followed by a job in the War Office, diversified by the delights of authorship, dramatic reading and theatre-going. In 1805, aged twenty-one, he wrote a series of vigorous and independent theatrical criticisms for the "News," and three years later founded, with his brother John, a level-headed business man, a Sunday paper called the "Examiner," the objects of which were "to assist in producing reforms in Parliament, liberality of opinion in general (especially freedom from superstition) and a fusion of tastes into all subjects whatever." This succeeded to such an extent that he and his brother were making an income of eight to ten guineas a week each, and this, with his £100 a year from the War Office was sufficient to justify thoughts of marriage, so he wrote to Marianne, to whom he had been engaged for eight years: "I will not see a wife who loves me and is the joy of my existence afraid to speak to me of money matters; she shall not tremble to hear a knock at the door; she will tremble I hope, with nothing but love and joy in the arms of her husband." He was twenty-five and she twenty-one.

Before he got married he, rather quixotically, resigned from the War Office to devote himself to the "Examiner." Of its conduct by his brother and himself he writes: "We had absolutely no views whatever but those of a decent competence and of the public good; and we thought, I dare affirm, a great deal more of the latter than of the former. . . . As to myself, what I thought of more than either was the making of verses. I did nothing for the greater part of the week but write verses and read books. I then made a rush at my editorlal duties; took a world of superfluous pains in the writing, sat up late at night, and was a very trying person to compositors and newsmen . . . who never complained."

Of his early married life his son, Thornton Hunt, writes: "His animation, his sympathy with what was gay and pleasurable, his doctrine of cultivating cheerfulness, were manifest on the surface, and could be appreciated by those who knew him in society, most probably even exaggerated as salient traits on which he himself insisted with a sort of gay and ostentatious wilfulness." Brimley Johnson says that "his married life was from the beginning a comfortless scramble, but he had the family genius for ignoring the grave and enjoying the trivial." Here is an impression from his son's pen: "Those who knew him best will picture him clothed in a dressing-gown and bending his head over a book or over the desk. At some periods of his life he

rose early in order that he might get to work early ; in other periods he rose late because he sat over the desk very late. For the most part, however, he habitually came down too late for breakfast, and was no sooner seated sideways at the table than he began to read. . . . He sometimes read at dinner though not always . . . he read at the tea-table, and all the evening read or wrote . . . he mixed somewhat in society and his own house was noted among a truly selected circle of friends for the ease of its conversational recreation." It may sound attractive, but it seems unmethodical and one is not surprised that the Hunts were nearly always worried about money matters.

And who were the members of the truly selected circle of friends ? Du Bois, editor of the " Monthly Review," who " had no faculty for gravity " ; Thomas Campbell, the poet, " with a consciousness of authorship upon him " ; Charles Mathews, the comedian, " who looked like an irritable in-door pet " ; James and Horace Smith, the authors of the " Rejected Addresses " ; and Charles and Mary Lamb, with whom he was already very intimate.

In four years Leigh Hunt and John, to whose business acumen the paper's financial success was due, had established in the " Examiner " " a paper which fought effectively with prejudice and privilege, with tyranny and superstition . . . and set the example of that independent thought and fearless expression of opinion which has become the very life and power of the press."

In 1812 zeal outran discretion when, in comment on a panegyric on the Prince Regent, afterwards King George the Fourth, that had appeared in the " Morning Post," Leigh Hunt wrote, among other things, " that this exciter of desire, this Adonis in loveliness, was a corpulent gentleman of fifty ; in short, that this delightful, wise, pleasurable, honourable, virtuous, true and immortal prince, was a violater of his word, a libertine over head and ears in disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demireps. . . ." The almost inevitable consequence was a prosecution, and although the great Lord Brougham was briefed as counsel for the defence and employed all his invective, sarcasm and eloquence, the verdict was a fine for the Hunt brothers of £500 each and two years' imprisonment in separate gaols.

So John went to Coldbath Fields and Leigh to Horsemonger Lane Gaol, where, thanks to the doctors, he secured fairly comfortable quarters in which his wife and children were allowed to join him. These apartments were wards in the Infirmary and of them he writes : " One of these, not very providently (for I had not yet learned to think of money) I turned into a noble room. I papered the walls with a trellis of roses ; I had the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky ; the barred windows I screened with Venetian blinds ; and when my beloved bookcases were set up with their busts, and flowers and a pianoforte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side of the water. I took a pleasure, when a stranger knocked at the door, to see him come in and stare about him. . . . Charles Lamb declared there was no other such a room except in a fairy tale. . . . There was a little yard . . . this yard I shut in with green palings, adorned it with a trellis, bordered it with a thick bed of earth from a nursery, and even contrived to have a grass plot. The earth I filled with flowers. Thomas Moore who came to see me with Lord Byron, told me he had seen no such heartsease. Here I wrote and read in fine weather, sometimes under an awning . . . and fancy myself hundreds of miles off. But my triumph was in issuing forth of a morning. A wicket out of the garden led into the large one belonging to the prison. The latter was only for vegetables ; but it contained a cherry tree which I saw twice in blossom. I parcelled

out the ground in my imagination into favourite districts. I made a point of dressing myself as if for a long walk, and then putting on my gloves and taking my book under my arm, stepped forth, requesting my wife not to wait dinner if I was too late."

In these fancifully described surroundings he was visited, in addition to those friends already named, by Hazlitt, Cowden Clarke, Brougham, Bentham, Keats and, above all, by Shelley, who was later to become his idol. His devotion to Shelley was almost beyond belief and he would not listen to any depreciation of him or of his genius. But in spite of the gaiety of his fancy, his life in prison was not all "summer in Eden" as Dickens says of another place. The confinement necessarily caused him much nerve-strain and physical suffering. His own words are: "An illness of long standing which required very different treatment had by this time (1815 when his sentence came to an end) been burnt in upon me by the iron that enters into the soul of a captive, wrap it in flowers as he may." The imprisonment, moreover, confirmed his habits of indolence, self-absorption and self-indulgence, and weakened the small responsibility which he felt as to the conduct of his private concerns.

III

But his segregation from the outer world did not stop his editorship of the "Examiner," which had brought him considerable influence in the literary world and personal contact with Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Hogg, Procter ("Barry Cornwall"), Love Peacock, to say nothing of the already mentioned companionship of Shelley, who, although eight years his junior, had already written the beautiful "Queen Mab" and had got himself into a most appalling matrimonial tangle. When Harriet Shelley committed suicide in 1816, it was to Leigh Hunt that the bereaved poet turned for comfort and consolation. Shelley, who belonged to a wealthy family, was able to help Hunt considerably in his ever-recurring financial difficulties. The two families kept a sort of common purse. I quote Brimley Johnson: "In all matters between them the distinctions of *meum* and *tuum* were lost sight of though it happened that, so far as purely financial relationships were concerned, the more difficult part of gracefully *receiving* benefits fell to Hunt. As much as £1,400 is said to have passed between them in one year and this sum by no means represented the whole of Hunt's indebtedness. It is alike to the credit of both that the fact caused no rupture in their intimacy or in that of their wives. A glance at the debtor's method of expressing gratitude may serve in some measure to explain this anomaly. 'My dear Mary,' he writes to Mrs. Shelley in September, 1821, 'pray thank Shelley, or rather do not, for that kind part of his offer relating to the expenses. I find I have omitted it, but the instinct that led me to do so is more honourable to him than thanks. I hope you think so.' Hunt always regretted that, for any undertaking in which they were mutually interested, Shelley had more means than he, but a consideration for his friend's feelings prevented his dwelling on this misfortune. . . . It happens that there is abundant evidence of Hunt's cheerful readiness to apply it—towards Haydon for instance—in cases where the material loss was his own."

In an article in the "Tatler" Hunt wrote: "Supposing us to be in want of patronage (meaning of course financial help) and in possession of talent enough to make it an honour to notice us, we would rather have some great and comparatively private friend rich enough to assist us, and amiable enough to render obligation delightful, than become the public property of any man or of any government." I suppose that last phrase means become a bankrupt liable to arrest;

one is not astonished at his confession in another place that the multiplication table had always been a mystery to him. Such a philosophy might be very amusing in a man like Leigh Hunt, but such loose methods of managing one's affairs would not do for the rest of us.

Less fortunate times for Hunt were approaching. By 1821 the "Examiner" showed signs, in spite of all John's efforts, of not doing very well as a source of income; Mrs. Hunt became a confirmed invalid; and when Byron and Shelley, mainly at Shelley's instigation, wrote to him from Italy inviting him to join them and to become the editor of a new magazine that they thought of founding, to be called the "Liberal," together with a half-share of the profits, Hunt jumped at the chance, and resigned the editorship of the "Examiner." Byron, indemnified by Shelley, sent him £200 for the journey and gave him the ground-floor of his palace at Pisa. But a day or two after Hunt's arrival there, Shelley was drowned and Hunt with Byron attended the funeral pyre of Shelley's body on the seashore. There is no doubt that the loss of Shelley deeply affected Leigh Hunt and made him hysterically overwrought. He writes in his Autobiography: "See how extremes can appear to meet, even on occasions the most overwhelming; nay, by reason of them; for as cold can perform the effect of fire and burn us, so can despair put on the monstrous aspect of mirth. On returning from one of our visits to this seashore we dined and drank—I mean Lord Byron and myself—dined little and drank too much. Lord Byron had not shone that day, even in his cups, which usually brought out his best qualities. As to myself I had bordered upon emotions which I have never suffered myself to indulge . . . we sang, we laughed, we shouted. . . ."

After Shelley's death Byron did not behave very well. He cooled off about the magazine, made difficulties about the expenses which were doled out "through the degrading medium of a steward"; the "Liberal," for which Hunt had worked very hard, was never a success and died after its fourth number; Byron and Hunt separated and went to live at Genoa in different houses; then Byron went on to Greece where he died in 1824, and Hunt passed on to Florence whence he returned to England in 1825, again having his expenses, £200, paid for him, this time by Colburn, the publisher.

IV

While he had stayed in Italy he had written many papers for the "Examiner" which were afterwards collected and published as "The Town" and "Men, Women and Books." He also wrote a brochure "Christianism, or Belief and Unbelief Reconciled." As, of course, he had no money, this was published for him in 1832 by John Forster, who had come from Newcastle three years previously and joined the staff of the "Examiner" as literary critic. Although Forster was only seventeen when he came to London in 1829 he knew Hunt almost at once and had begun to lay the foundations of his reputation as a universal friend. Forster became acquainted with Dickens at Ainsworth's house at Christmas, 1836, by which time he was firmly established in the literary life of the Metropolis, whereas Dickens had only to his credit the completed *Sketches by Boz*. He had, however, suddenly burst into splendour with the still unfinished *Pickwick Papers*. These two young ardent spirits—they were only twenty-four—immediately took to one another and Forster was no doubt proud, a few months later, to introduce his brilliant friend to his older and experienced chief, Leigh Hunt, a veteran of fifty-three, who welcomed the new literary star, the intimate friend of Cruikshank and Ainsworth already known to him. Dickens was doubtless familiar, like everybody else, with Leigh Hunt's sparkling essays.

The friendship between Dickens and Leigh Hunt soon ripened and became cordial and mutual, and must have been of great assistance to the younger man as it brought him in contact with Macready, Landor, Charles Knight, Carlyle and a host of others. It also saw a little easier time for Hunt who in 1844 received an annuity from Sir Percy Shelley; but even this did not entirely relieve the recurring financial embarrassments in which his careless business habits continually landed him. In 1840 Southey, the Poet Laureate, lost his reason, and Leigh Hunt became a sort of unofficial Deputy Laureate, producing some sincerely loyal poems addressed to members of the Royal Family (what a change from his early days). Macaulay tried, but unsuccessfully, to get the Laureateship for Hunt when Southey died in 1843. Hunt bore his disappointment well and was not disgruntled, and indeed when Wordsworth, the new Laureate, died seven years later and was succeeded by Alfred Tennyson, he gave him in his "Journal" the warmest welcome. There was nothing mean or paltry about Hunt, although he never lost his careless treatment of money matters and did not hesitate at any time to borrow from his friends in the most light-hearted, but seriously dignified manner, as though he were conferring the favour and not they. Macaulay records in his diary his pleasure at receiving a begging-letter from Hunt accompanied by a severe criticism of his "Lays of Ancient Rome." And here is a letter to Laman Blanchard: "I have thought of you a hundred times. The truth is that since hearing from you (which is the reason I did not send again) I have received some money out of which I was very desirous of rescuing the amount of what you were so kind as to oblige me with, in order that I might cut a great figure by anticipating my promised day of payment. Alas, after all I cannot do it. The pounds vanish from my hands almost as if they had not been; and I am still left struggling, though relieved. Under these circumstances I will continue your debtor till the time mentioned and most assuredly shall not be at all impatient of the debt, as an obligation for it is a genuine pleasure (let who will say to the contrary) to be obliged by a genuine friend, and one who could write as you did about it; but we are neither of us rich; and the only thing which made me loth to ask the money, makes me anxious to return it."

His innocence of business method was deplorable: his publishers, Smith Elder & Co., gave him a cheque for £100; he didn't know what to do with it and did not understand "presenting it" at a bank, so they cashed it for him and gave him bank-notes, which he put in an envelope. On reaching home he threw it on the table and his wife later flung it into the fire. He told Smith Elders about the incident and they took him to the Bank of England; on the way he purchased a little statuette of Psyche which he nursed on his arm. In the course of the Bank interview he walked up to one of the officials and said, "And this is the Bank of England. And do you sit here all day and never see the green woods and the trees and the flowers and the charming country? Are you contented with such a life?" And all the time he nursed his little Psyche.

In 1847 Macaulay was taking steps to obtain a Civil List Pension for Hunt, and Dickens and others organised a benefit performance for Leigh Hunt and John Poole. The play chosen was Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour" and £400 was realised for each of the beneficiaries.

V

The Civil List Pension, £200, was granted, and thereafter Hunt seems to have been more comfortably off if not exactly prosperous. He writes: "What a beatitude to find myself, at last, actually paying

as I go, and incurring no more bills ! I hardly seem to have yet recovered the delightful stunning of the security and silence."

Hunt was, without doubt, full of grace and charm, and here is an instance. J. T. Fields, at Barry Cornwall's house, heard Leigh Hunt accepting a glass of port wine at dinner and as a gesture of friendship offered to send him a supply from his wine merchant's. This was the reply he received :

" July 25, 1859. My dear Mr. Fields : Though I take port when I dine out, which is a thing that occurs once in a hundred years, and, therefore, constitutes with me a chronological event, an epoch, an Hegira, yet I am not in the habit of taking it, doubt much whether it would agree with me, and therefore am extremely cautious how I open a fresh account with the chance. So you must be content again, my kind friend, with taking my sense of your kindness for any acceptance of it. A good intention, where faith is to be put into it, as it is in yours, is itself a good deed, or to be counted as such ; and I assure you I lay it up in my memory ; for what makes a good deed, but the intention at the heart of it ? So you may rest as satisfied as I am thankful.

" You and yours, I see, have kind ears as well as faces. May nothing discordant ever reach them. Most sincerely yours, LEIGH HUNT. P.S.—I have reasons for liking our dear friend Procter's wine, beyond what you saw when we dined together at his table ; but I am obliged to be very cautious with his too."

Whatever may have been his weaknesses he surely does not deserve this rather crude censure by Robert Lynd : " No one goes so far as to believe Hunt capable of Skimpole's worst crimes, but *Bleak House* has certainly immortalised the legend of his parasitism and his imbecile irresponsibility in money matters."

Leigh Hunt's last years were brightened by the affection of his admirers : Mrs. Carlyle, who kissed him on one occasion, says that few doses of flattery were too strong for him, and the charm and grace, the gentleness and ingenuousness of his ways disarmed everyone ; and hear what Carlyle says : " . . . fine, clean elastic figure too—he had five feet ten or more—chivalrous, gentlemanly carriage, polite, affectionate, respectful to her (Carlyle always so alluded to his wife) and yet so free and natural " ; and of Hunt's household : " half-a-dozen old ricketty chairs, dusty table and ragged carpet, all kinds of litter—books, paper, egg-shells, scissors, and last night when I was there the torn heart of a half-quartern loaf. . . . Hunt's home is a sort of ' poetical Tinkerdom ' where the noble Hunt receives you in the spirit of a King, apologises for nothing, places you in the best seat, takes a window-sill himself if there is no other, and there folding closer his ' muslin cloud ' of a printed night-gown in which he always writes, commences the liveliest dialogue on philosophy and the prospects of man (who is to be beyond measure happy yet)."

The even current of Hunt's late life was disturbed by two bereavements : his favourite son, Vincent, died in 1852 and at the beginning of 1857 he lost his wife, " the partner of his life for more than half a-century . . . may all of us who desire to meet elsewhere do so and be then shewn the secret of the great, awful, and, it is to be trusted, the beautiful riddle." So this brilliant literary sun, after shining with exquisite refulgence for nearly fifty years, sank quietly below the horizon in a lambent glow, shedding warm rays of serene friendship over the whole landscape ; all disappointments, frustrations and financial anxieties forgotten in the calm beauty of his final setting. He was seventy-five.

(To be concluded)

FILM PROSPECTING AMONG THE YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS

By JOHN CROYDON

I

TO transcribe any work of Charles Dickens into screen-play terms requires the utmost care and consideration from the literary as well as the practical point of view. I shall not endeavour at this time to discuss the literary aspect except to say that Ealing Studios are now attempting such a task with *Nicholas Nickleby*. Time enough if, and when, our version reaches the screen to discuss its transcription, and perhaps, particularly in the case of the Dickens Fellowship, to reserve our arguments as a probable form of defence. Sufficient to say that any screen version cannot completely satisfy every Dickens enthusiast, no matter how carefully the film producer goes to work. There are bound to be omissions, and some alteration of plot or dialogue to bridge the omissions, and no single film can ensure that every favourite scene or character can be included. However, the Dickens Fellowship can rest assured that Ealing Studios are taking every care that the story presented on the screen will follow the original text as closely as possible, bearing in mind that it is a Hollywood-fed Movie audience for which it is catering. The practical side of the proposed film also presents an interesting and instructive aspect, equally important to myself, the Associate Producer of the film, as I have the task of seeing that the correct period atmosphere is retained throughout, and that all matters of research are faithfully attended to and reproduced. This question of research and representation of period styles, customs, furnishings, speech, deportment, and other items, is in itself a fascinating subject, and calls for great concentration of study and physical hard labour. One of the episodes of *Nicholas Nickleby* which has drawn particular attention to itself is that of the Squeers family and their ill-famed home, Dotheboys Hall. We considered that to attain an authentic background we should visit the district, and so Cavalcanti, the Director of the film, J. A. E. Kitchen, a Dickens enthusiast who is acting as our adviser on these matters, and myself, decided to retrace the steps of the novelist and see for ourselves what is left of the actual scene as he viewed it, and to find out whether or not some of the places could be used in our film.

Although Dickens deals fully with the questions of Yorkshire schools and their masters in the prefaces to the first, and the first cheap editions of his work, he is not explicit on the subject of person or place, and so recourse was made to the late T. P. Cooper's book, "With Dickens in Yorkshire," to Mr. Leslie C. Staples, the Secretary of the Dickens Fellowship, and Mr. J. Ingram Dawson, who would be able to aid us on the spot. References to various Lives of Charles Dickens filled in several gaps, and, in due course, we found ourselves staying, as did Dickens himself, at the King's Head Hotel in Barnard Castle. Our journey was simpler and more expeditious than his, but our reception at Barnard Castle was, perhaps, more disillusioning. It was a December morning, very dark, very cold, a long wait at a draughty station whilst finding a taxi and awaiting its arrival; an arrival at the King's Head almost before anyone was stirring; a cold wait whilst fires were lit; and a breakfast hastily prepared. However, very soon, to the accompaniment of a roaring fire and a war-time breakfast of Yorkshire proportions, the outlook brightened and we prepared to enjoy our visit. We had arranged to dine with Mr. Dawson, until recently Town Clerk of Barnard Castle, and had the remainder of the day in which to start our researches. Several points

had already emerged from our reading and the study of Risdale Tate' conventional illustrations to Mr. Cooper's book—the principal bein that the existing Villa in Bowes, the original Dotheboys Hall, would owing to modernisation and the removal of the out-buildings tha formed the schoolrooms, be unsuitable for screen purposes, that th village of Bowes was now very different from that seen by Dickens and that we were likely to encounter considerable opposition in ou enquiries from the local people who are alleged still to resent Dickens' interference with the prosperity brought to the district by the loca schools.

II

We first visited Greta Bridge and, apart from the new iron bridg built by the side of the lovely single span humped bridge, found it a mellow and significant in its feeling of the past as Dickens himself mus have done. Its tranquillity was soon broken, however, by the rumbl of a passing squadron of tanks, bringing with them not only th contrast of the twentieth to the nineteenth century, but also shattering reminder of the direction in which man's portrayal of hi heritage has travelled.

We continued our drive to Barningham, where we found the firs school building. Although the building had a certain grimness abou it, it nevertheless did not at first suggest the atmosphere which Dicken had indicated in his chapters of Dotheboys Hall.

We passed on to Bowes itself, which we entered with considerabl trepidation, hoping that we did not look conventional film men although our appearance in protecting ourselves from an unexpecte heavy rain-storm must have been a little peculiar. We walked throug the village, inclined rather to look at the buildings associated wit *Nicholas Nickleby* out of the corner of our eye, so as not to attrac too much attention to ourselves, but, on reaching the end of the villag and the original Dotheboys Hall, the temptation was too much, and on finding open the gateway to the court-yard and the ill-famed pump we became the conventional tourists. As is well known, the court yard and the pump are the originals, and there were certainly many corners which looked most tempting for our purpose. However, th house itself has obviously been altered, and as the schoolrooms n longer exist it would be of little value in the making of a film. W also took note of Mr. Cooper's warning that visitors are not welcome to the Villa, and continued on our way.

Seeing a road-sweeper and wanting to confirm that we *had* jus seen the Villa, we took our courage in both hands and put the questio to him. To our amazement the road-sweeper not only confirmed tha it was the Villa, but proceeded to relate its whole history and it association with Dickens, though it was firmly in his mind that it wa called not the "Villa" but "Dotheboys Hall." He also reeled of the history in such a way that it was obvious he had told the story many times before, and, far from being antagonistic, wanted to b much more helpful than we thought desirable.

We visited the Church and Church-yard and were able to identif the headstone of the boy whose story so impressed Dickens that i brought Smike alive in his imagination.

Leaving the Church-yard we tried to look at the "Unicorn," but a this was in the hands of the Army, we were only able to look at i from the roadway. However, it looked very much as pictured b Risdale Tate. Returning towards our car, we discovered Bowes Hal which, from our point of view as film-makers, aroused considerabl excitement. However, as we had other places to see and also to hav our talk with Mr. Dawson, we did not give it detailed attention.

That evening we had our eagerly-awaited dinner with Mr. Dawso

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t the King's Head Hotel in Barnard Castle. Mr. Dawson had gone
o great trouble to enquire into all the historical associations of his
own and was able to give us a great deal of information. Among the
tories he had to tell us were some which make me think that Dickens
nd the Yorkshire schools are becoming, to a certain extent, legendary
n the district. Mr. Dawson claims to have taken the original John
rowdie to record his vote in the North Riding of Yorkshire election
n 1881. In the Bowes Museum I was shown a photograph supposed
o be that of Smike, then an old man. This man is said to have been
nterviewed by Dickens. There is no doubt that the present generation
f Yorkshiremen is not only becoming reconciled to the fact that
ickens wrote about and exposed a feature of their county which ranks
mong the blacker sides of English social history, but that, with the
ealing touch of time, there is a certain pride in the fact that the great
ovelist took sufficient interest in the district to write this social
xposure and then to use a local character, Master Humphrey, to
ecord happier recollections of his Yorkshire wanderings. And, of
ourse, there is his pleasanter essay on his tour of Yorkshire and his
se of the story of the Five Sisters of York.

III

Mr. Ingram Dawson, in recalling his youth, told us two stories about
he Yorkshire schools of which he had had personal knowledge. He
mself attended a school at Gainford, just across the County border,
Durham. In Gainford was one of the less reputable schools and its
niform included leather breeches for Sunday wear. It was the
ractice of this school for the pupils to attend Sunday church *en masse*.
t one time only about half the pupils were seen at church and, on
nquiry, it was discovered that the leather breeches were giving out
nd, as there were only enough for half the boys, the others had to
main on the premises. The headmaster of the school attended by
r. Dawson, sent a representative to the sale of the effects of Mr.
naw's Academy when it closed to acquire effects for his own use.
he sale was to have taken place in the dining-room of the Academy,
ut the room was pervaded by a smell so overpowering that eventually
he sale was concluded in the yard. It seems that the boys had eaten
heir meals seated on forms at a long table and the staple diet seemed
o have been jacketed potatoes. The boys, who had become expert
cket removers and who had obviously taken considerable interest
the amount of potatoes they could consume in a given time, had
llowed the peelings to fall to the ground. No effort had been made to
ean the floor and along the base of each form was a continuous heap
putrified potato peelings. This was one reason, at any rate, for the
le being completed in the open air.

Another interesting fact which Mr. Dawson offered us was that the
nfortunates lodged with Mr. Shaw, in common with the boys of most
her Yorkshire schools, were in the habit of inscribing their names on
ny suitable object that came their way and by any means at their
nvenient disposal. At Mr. Shaw's Academy this took the form of
boriously tracing names on the beams of the attics with the smoke
candles. Mr. Dawson assured us that these names are still in
istence, and it is to be hoped that on a future visit, and with the
terest a film company always arouses when it starts work, it will be
ssible for us to see this evidence of captivity.

Mr. Dawson, who is the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the
owes Museum in Barnard Castle, suggested that we should pay it a
sit. Here Mr. Harrison, the curator, has assembled a great deal of
formation about Dickens and Yorkshire, including several original
tters written by Mr. Shaw concerning the lawsuits which drew

Dickens's attention to the state of affairs. However, Mr. Harrison is interested mainly in Master Humphrey's Clock and in his "Dickens Room"—I believe not yet open to the general public but which he very kindly allowed us to view—preserves the original Clock. The Museum is an astounding place to find in a small town like Barnard Castle and is well worth a visit. Its size and associations form a picture which has to be seen to be believed. However, this is not intended to be a history of the Bowes Museum and I must pass on to our second visit to the village of Bowes.

IV

This was primarily to review Bowes Hall, which we had decided was the most cinematic building for our purposes and which possessed the additional attraction of being an original Academy, flourishing simultaneously with that of Mr. Shaw. The current advertisement of the attractions of this establishment is worth re-recording:

EDUCATION

At Bowes Hall Academy, near Greta Bridge, Yorkshire.

Young Gentlemen are plentifully Boarded, and carefully instructed by Mr. Clarkson and able assistants in the English, Latin, and Greek Languages; Writing and Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Mensuration, and the most useful branches of Mathematics; the French language taught by a native of France.

For cards and references apply to Mr. Smith, the agent, 26 Lombard Street. Mr. C. will be in town in a few days, and may be treated after his arrival at the Carolina Coffee-House, Birching Lane, Cornhill.

Mr. Tate's illustration of Bowes Hall is a very faithful reproduction, but I think gives an impression of mellowness alien to the structure. Its grimness is accentuated at the present time by the removal for war-time salvage of the iron railings, pictured by Mr. Tate, and the iron gateways that now hang dismally broken from their hinges.

The building itself is a three-storied structure in stone with the typical Yorkshire slate roof. Windows of a particularly noticeable square pattern, picked out in yellow and green, line themselves on each floor like a number of postage stamps on a parcel. The front door is not placed centrally and gives the building a peculiar uneven appearance. A number of the rooms are unused, but all the windows are curtained to a pattern, and altogether Bowes Hall conveys an impression of regimentation which immediately creates a suggestion of barracks and confined quarters. This impression of grimness is emphasised by my recollection that the vine pictured by Risdale Tate no longer exists.

Enquiring from the present owner if he would allow us to use his house eventually for film purposes, we were met with a very generous assent, and permission to look over the house. Unfortunately, as we were pressed for time we could not spend as long inside as we should have liked, particularly as we wanted also to inspect the outhouses which, according to Cooper, formed the schoolrooms in the time of the Clarksons. Entering the front door we found one of the most impressive and expressive stone-flagged halls we have ever seen. It is of moderate size and runs almost the full width of the house, the back accommodating a staircase to the upper storeys. The walls are of stone, some three to four feet thick. Doors on either side lead to the living rooms, the kitchen and store rooms. Beyond the doors are two stone circular columns carrying a massive stone entablature beyond which in turn starts the staircase. This staircase is of great beauty, cantilevered from the wall, the treads being some five to six feet in width. There is no soffit, each step appearing to be a separate stone, the underside of each tread being panelled. It mounts some twelve treads to a

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landing from which rises a high window and the staircase then turns back on itself, revealing to the hall the beautiful underside of the upper string, unimpeded by any under support. It originally had no balustrade. Unfortunately, during the years its beauty has become somewhat marred. Chocolate brown paint, a stair carpet, and a very plain wooden balustrade now disfigure it. Even so it remains impressive. Some disappointments awaited us in the house itself. To the left of the hall is a door leading through a corridor to a store room. Tapping the walls of the corridor discloses the fact that a room exists beyond it, and it apparently has been unopened for many years. Our fingers itched to lay hold of pick axes and hammers to break down the barrier and see what was beyond. We were sure we should find the remains of past schoolboys, or at least evidence of their existence. A number of window panes are scratched with boys' names and on the first floor is a shutter on which a boy has written a verse. The window panes have in some cases been moved from their original positions and many are cracked, cut to fit, or replaced upside down, and an attempt has been made to remove the verse from the shutter by means of soda and water. I suspect historical preservation is somewhat lacking here, but needless to say we have taken steps to rescue some of these items and after their use in the film of *Nicholas Nickleby*, it is hoped to present a number to the Dickens House.

Before leaving Bowes Hall we explored the farmyard and the outhouses. Cooper mentions that certain indications of their use as schoolrooms still exist, but, despite a careful search we were unable to identify any. However, our short visit had proved very profitable and we left Bowes with the satisfaction of knowing that when the time came to make our film we could return and present something to the public which, whilst not being the actual building selected by Dickens for his story, would nevertheless typify in an exemplary manner the evil that Dickens had exposed.

V

Without entering into an academic argument on the advisability of visually resuscitating these scenes of child cruelty, it is probably true to say that good purpose can be served by doing so. Recent happenings fully reported in the daily press have brought to light in a most forceful manner that all is not well even yet with many of the nation's children, and apart from the fact that the episode of Dotheboys Hall forms part of one of the great English literary masterpieces, carrying considerable entertainment value, it will, we hope, serve as a reminder that the welfare of children is a national responsibility. There is no doubt in my mind that whether Dotheboys Hall is played for comedy or tragedy, the sequence should have the effect of laughter, tears and indignation.

Before leaving Barnard Castle we called on Inspector Bryson, of the Yorkshire Constabulary, to acquaint him with our activities and, as well as being most charming and helpful to us, he took the opportunity of showing us a small building at the back of his station reputed to be a whipping shed for the benefit of the pupils of Startforth House and possibly other schools in the village of that name.

Having no further time available, we had then to return reluctantly to London. Whether our film is made or not our experiences were well worth the time spent and, for my part, I fully intend returning to complete a study of a historical institution which can only be described as fascinating. There are many men in the district who have considerable knowledge of the facts of these schools, whom we had no time to visit. What an amazing thing it is that Dickens was able to grasp the essentials of a social evil and present it so vividly and faithfully after the very brief visit that he made to the district. A master of his craft indeed.

THE BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

I

AS reported in the March number, the Luncheon held in celebrati of the 133rd Anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens w held in London, on February 10th. In spite of the uncertainties the time, there was an excellent attendance but the indisposition the President at the very last moment was the subject of general a very real regret. Mr. Henry Charles Dickens immediately consent to preside for us once again and yet again proved himself an ide and popular chairman, while the Honorary Treasurer generously agre to propose the toast of *The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens* but a few hours' notice. Mr. T. W. Hill said:

"'I am both a town traveller, and a country traveller, and a always on the road. I travel for the great House of Human Intere Brothers, and have rather a large collection in the fancy goods way Those are Dickens's own words, and I want to claim him as o of the greatest travellers and explorers of all time, and one of t greatest Guide Book writers who ever lived, for he had all the attribut of the successful explorer and of the authoritative guide book compil

"He possessed in an eminent degree the inquiring mind. N inquisitiveness, which is mere curiosity, but love of, and search fo truth. He was not satisfied with other people's reports; he want to see for himself. Another attribute, due to his perseverance a constancy, was infinite patience, especially when preparing for h journeys. I recall his constant attendance as a young man at t British Museum storing his mind with the knowledge that was put such effective use when he was writing those wonderful Guide Book His book indents at the Museum are still preserved, and the boo for which he asked are such books as Gibbon, Pepys, books on Po Law, and other subjects that show the bent of his thoughts even the beginning of his career. He also shewed infinite patience in settin out for our enjoyment the results of his explorations; the correctio in his proof sheets shew the pains he took to get them right; a this brings me to his third great quality: infinite industry.

"I suppose there never was a man who worked harder, or wh was more industrious. Everything he wrote, he wrote it himsel wrote it in longhand, although he was an expert stenographer, an seemed always ready to undertake additional work even when writin at high pressure, especially in his early manhood. All his life he ke level with an immense correspondence. Extensive as was his litera output, his letters probably exceed that output in volume, thoug this is not always realised. An immense number of letters has alread been published in the great Nonesuch Edition but we already kno that there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of letters which we left out of that collection. Indeed, I can almost say that it is possib his letter-writing exceeded the whole of his other literary work i quantity and quality, for some letters are as long or longer than on of the chapters in his books, and are moreover, from my own experienc quite as interesting to read.

"Now how was he able to get through so much? Only by doing a all really industrious people do; by parcelling out his time methodi ally; and this attention to method helped towards making him th great explorer that I claim him to be.

"Further, all explorers must have an engaging personality and th capacity for friendship. If they haven't, they will not win the conf dence of the natives of the countries they explore. Dickens had th engaging personality as well as the capacity for friendship and h

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d win the confidence of the natives he discovered and described. deed, he became the idol as well as the champion of the Common ople (with a capital P, as he said himself).

" Now, a true explorer doesn't usually go wandering about in untries already known. True explorers want to go somewhere ere a mere traveller or globe-trotter doesn't usually go. Otherwise, ey are not explorers ; they are only spectators ; and Dickens was rue explorer ; he went into the unknown regions. He had explored Darkest England ' long before General William Booth or even that ner Booth (Charles) who wrote about ' The Submerged Tenth.' e might almost say that it is probably due to Dickens's blazing the trail that they followed it up, for he was truly a pioneer. It s been said that half of the world doesn't know how the other half es. Well, Dickens set out to tell them. He meant, if possible, to ve the world a better place than he found it.

" And that brings me to my next point : an explorer must have e gift of vivid exposition. How dull a badly written book of travel n be ! And this gift of vivid exposition Dickens had in super cellence. I have heard it remarked that there is more life and ovement in one page of a Dickens novel than there is in a whole apter of any other author, and we as Dickensians are glad to know at the urge for exploration and the gift of vivid writing have re-peared in the fourth generation, in the person of Miss Monica Dickens o honours us with her presence to-day, although she has only ' one ir of feet ' to do the travelling, and ' one pair of hands ' to do the iting.

" It is well for a moment to inquire : where were these unknown gions that Dickens explored ? He said he travelled for Human terest Brothers. So he did. Although we know he noted and des-bed the scenery of the countries he visited, and although he gives nty of space to the description of surroundings, it is the inhabitants whom he is most interested ; he knows their manners and customs d explores their inmost minds. He was a psychologist before psych-gy was a science, and before novelists began to dabble in psychol-cal problems, and he used psychology without any of the parade knowledge to which modern novelists pretend. He was as much home in the mind of the deepest rogue like Merdle or Fagin, as he s in the mind of the shallow nincompoop like Mr. Toots or Mr. Dick, d he was equally at home in the mind of a child like Oliver Twist Poor Jo. If you want a really excellent sample of Dickens's goods this department, read the self-revelation of Miss Wade in *Little rrit.*

" To Dickens the explorer, the country containing these natives s just as well known. You remember what George Augustus Sala d about encountering him in the oddest places ; you see him riding as with seven-league boots in North End, Fulham, or striding Haverstock Hill.' His descriptions of cities like London, Rochester d Canterbury are classic, and his extensive acquaintance with glish geography abounds through his books ; you can still follow sely on the map the wanderings of Little Nell to the Midlands ; efforts of Bill Sikes to avoid pursuit ; the mad journey of Lady dlock in search of her child ; Nicholas's journey by coach to York-re ; or Magwitch's effort to escape down the Thames.

" Yes, Dickens's novels and his other published writings are in very th the finest guide books ever written, because they are guide books Human Interest, and consequently their attraction and usefulness never cease, for interest in the human mind must continue as long here is a human race, and so long as the human race exists, Dickens's ne and fame are secure ; in other words his memory is immortal.

" I ask you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to forgive the brevity of these remarks ; I fear the subject is one that I feel is capable of great expansion and I have only given you the merest scaffold. The good Dickensian can easily fill in the open spaces with any number of instances from his writings to finish the fabric.

" And now, I ask you to rise to drink this toast in silent thankfulness —not in sorrow that he is gone, but with heartfelt joy that his memory will live. To the Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens ! "

II

The toast of the visitors was proposed by the Honorary Secretary and was replied to by Miss Monica Dickens, the well-known novelist and great-granddaughter of Charles Dickens, in the following speech :

" It is a very great honour to be present to-day, and to speak at such an enjoyable meeting of the Dickens Fellowship.

" Mr. Staples has already mentioned Miss Mabel Constanduros and Mr. Howard Agg and their adaptation of *Bleak House* on the B.B.C. I am sure that it interested you all. When you listened to it, perhaps you tuned in to criticise, but I am sure you remained to appreciate.

" I would like to say that I think it is a particularly welcome venture in these days when so many people seem to have so little time for reading. I know that the Libraries will tell you there are not enough books to go round, but I think that is partly due to the shortage of books and probably because the paper quota is so small, rather than to an increase in the number of readers. I think it is probable that the majority of present-day readers is made up of middle-aged people, factory workers, lonely wives and people in the services. But there seems to be a lot of young people, hard-working people, who simply haven't done any reading at all. I am not talking about the real readers, those who look upon books as essential as food. You see them reading in buses, in trains, and even walking along the street. They will read after a long day's work, or in their lunchtime, or perhaps under the factory bench.

" But there is quite a number of young people who will say to you, and I know because I have worked amongst them in factory and hospital—' Oh no, I never get time for reading. Dickens ! Oh, I couldn't tackle him ! It's as much as I can do to get through my " Daily Mirror " ! ' Probably a lot of these people have never read a word of Dickens since they were made to at school. They possibly learnt it as I did Shakespeare, which consisted of reading and analysing it and finding a whole lot of things which I am sure Shakespeare never meant ; and they have probably been quite put off. I think those people may possibly have heard *Bleak House* as a background at their work ; or they may have heard it at home, or perhaps they didn't even intend to hear it, and it must have come as a revelation that it was such marvellous entertainment.

" Thanks to Miss Constanduros and Mr. Agg for the splendid way in which they managed to adapt it. The broadcast version of *Bleak House* must have shown these people that a Victorian novel by Charles Dickens wasn't just another classic, and therefore entirely unreadable. I can only hope that it may have acted as an hors-d'oeuvre and given them a hunger for the main meal.

" A friend of mine, who is a nurse, said ' I have been round to the library and got *Bleak House*. I am going to read the bits they didn't give on the wireless. I read some last night. It's marvellous my dear, perfectly amazing ! ' A debt of gratitude is certainly due to these two people for opening the gates of what may be a life-time of very real pleasure.

" When I spoke to Miss Constanduros about *Bleak House*, she

told me that she would like to adapt some other novels of Dickens for broadcasting—I believe she mentioned *Our Mutual Friend* and *Great Expectations*, and I said 'Why not?' She replied 'That depends on the public!' If enough members of the Dickens Fellowship will write to the B.B.C. and clamour for it, no doubt the B.B.C. will agree to other novels being broadcast. And if the B.B.C. hears that the Dickens Fellowship liked *Bleak House*, well then they will know it must have been good. So it's up to you.

"I always think it is absolutely staggering and really rather frightening on these occasions to find out how intimately you all know your Dickens. You understand it all from back to front. I like to think that I am a true Dickensian, and I would as soon read one of my great-grandfather's books as anything. In fact, I like to get back to him, possibly to recuperate, after the novels of nowadays. But in this company I feel that I have about a quarter of your knowledge of the subject, so I am carefully refraining from making any allusions, and I am not doing any quoting. I don't want to have you going out murmuring 'disgraceful, my dear—a member of the family and she didn't know who Mrs. Jellyby's second cousin was.' It lets down the name.

"So, before I let down the name any further and prove my ineptitude at speech-making, I will just say again what a very great honour it has been to be here, and thank Mr. Staples and the members of the Fellowship very much indeed for asking me. As for the other visitors, if they have enjoyed themselves as much as I have, then they have enjoyed themselves a lot."

Messages from Branches of The Dickens Fellowship throughout the world were read by the Honorary Secretary. These greetings are more than usually welcome in these troublous times and it was noted with pleasure that a great many branches exchanged them. Every branch was greeted from Headquarters.

In the then still enforced absence of weather reports from our daily life it was a pleasure to hear a number of them given in the inimitable style of many of the best-known Dickens characters, delivered in a truly brilliant manner by Mr. Percy Merriman, who never pleased us more, bringing the highly successful afternoon to a conclusion.

NOTES ON *A TALE OF TWO CITIES*

By T. W HILL

(*Continued from page* 74)

BOOK II

Chapter XII

1. VAUXHALL GARDENS. A place of public entertainment, providing orchestra, concerts, refreshment pavilions ". . . lodges, groves, grottoes, lawns, temples, and cascades; porticos, colonnades, rotundas; adorned with pillars, statues and paintings; the whole illuminated with an infinite number of lamps disposed in different figures of suns, stars and constellations . . ." (Smollett's "Humphry Clinker"). The Gardens began to decline in popularity about 1830 to 1840, but were not finally closed till 1859. The site can be identified by Auckland Street, Vauxhall, as it runs diagonally across the place where the grounds were.

2. RANELAGH. Offered the same kind of entertainment with the addition of aquatic sports; the catering arrangements were more elaborate than those at Vauxhall. It was finally demolished in 1805, the site being approximately occupied by the present Ranelagh Gardens adjoining the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Chapter XIV

1. ST. PANCRAS FAR OFF IN THE FIELDS. No longer, of course, "far off in the fields," although the churchyard and the adjoining grounds of the St. Pancras Hospital give the little church a certain rural aspect.

2. GENTLE CRAFT. Izaak Walton's own epithet for the sport of angling.

Chapter XV

1. DAMIENS. The incident related is historical. Robert François Damiens was born 1715, a man of low character, who became a soldier and a domestic servant. On January 5th, 1757, he attempted to assassinate King Louis XV as the King was entering his carriage. His punishment was, in all its horrible details, exactly that which Jacques Three foretold for the man who killed Monsieur the Marquis.

2. VERSAILLES. A residential city, of 100,000 inhabitants in 1789, eleven miles from Paris, the chief attraction of which is the Royal Palace built by Louis XIV; the beautifully laid out grounds have always been a favourite resort for Parisians.

3. ATTENDED BY THE SHINING BULL'S EYE. At Versailles, the waiting-room (*salle d'attente*) on the first floor adjoining the Royal bedchamber, was called, from its oval window, the Bull's-Eye (*Œil de Boeuf*). Dickens applies the name, as does Carlyle, to the members of the Royal retinue. By the Revolution—"Versailles s'est fondu dans la nation; Paris est devenu l'Œil de Boeuf" (Littré)—all its intrigues disappeared. Carlyle writes: "It has grown well-nigh too hard to govern even the Œil de Boeuf . . . it is a changed Œil de Boeuf . . . no wonder the Œil de Boeuf feels melancholy" (I, III, i).

Chapter XVI

1. ANISEED. The seed of the anise. Defarge, the wine merchant, would stock it as it is much used in the preparation of liqueurs; water, flavoured with aniseed and sweetened, is also used on the Continent as a cooling drink.

2. VENGEANCE AND RETRIBUTION. The sentiment here expressed finds support in "Clarissa" (1748) by Samuel Richardson (1689-1761): "Vengeance, though it comes with leaden feet, strikes with iron hands."

Chapter XVIII

1. NEIGHBOURING CHURCH. It has been suggested that this is the parish church of St. Anne, Soho. But, although there is nothing about religion in the book, both Darnay (a French aristocrat) and Lucie (the daughter of a French professional man), not being Protestant refugees would probably be Roman Catholics, in which case they would not of course be married by a Protestant clergyman in a Protestant church. *If* they were Protestants they might have been married either at St. Anne's or at St. Mary the Virgin in Charing Cross Road (then known as Hog Lane) as French Protestants had possession of this church from 1684 to 1822.

Chapter XIX

1. GUINEAS, SHILLINGS AND BANKNOTES. Guineas is, of course, correct, as the modern sovereign or pound did not come into existence till 1817.

Chapter XXI

1. THAT TIME PASSED. The period covered by this chapter is not detailed, but from the date 1789 mentioned later, about seven years elapsed.

2. LITTLE LUCIE. The date of her birth can be almost exactly fixed. "It was now about Little Lucie's sixth birthday . . . a great storm in France . . . a night in mid-July, 1789." That storm was the rising of Saint Antoine and the storming of the Bastille; the date was July 14th, and it seems legitimate to conclude that Little Lucie was born on July 14th, 1783.

3. THE BASTILLE. Built at the Porte St. Antoine as a defence against the English, 1370-1383. Bastille means a fortress defended by bastions; it had eight towers and a battlemented top furnished with cannon. An interesting parallel between the Tower of London and the Bastille at Paris: the London fortress-prison is *The* Tower; the Paris fortress-prison of La Bastille St. Antoine became *La* Bastille.

4. LINSTOCK. At first lintstock ; a forked staff to hold a lighted match of lint dipped in saltpetre for firing a gun, sometimes ornamented with hammered ironwork. Its usefulness ceased when guns were fired by percussion.

5. WINE-SHOP KEEPER. Dickens makes a Defarge a wine-shop keeper ; Carlyle writes : " Cholat the *wine-merchant* has become an impromptu cannonier. Sauterne the sonorous *brewer* of the Suburb Saint-Antoine advises rather that the place be fired " (I, v, vi).

6. THE GOVERNOR. His name is given by Carlyle : " Rigorous old De Launay . . . gives fire ; pulls up his drawbridge . . . sinks the drawbridge ; rushes in the living deluge " (I, v, vi). Dickens's picturesque and vivid account of the storming of the Bastille is closely based on all the historical accounts, incident by incident.

7. GREY COAT AND RED DECORATION. What Carlyle calls " gray frock with poppy-coloured riband . . . Miserable De Launay ! He shall never enter the Hôtel-de-Ville ; only his ' bloody hair-queue held up in a bloody hand ' ; that shall enter, for a sign . . . aloft on a pike " (I, v, vii).

CHAPTER XXII

1. OLD FOULON. Like Damiens, the assassin, in Book II, Ch. xv, an historical personage. Foulon had been Commissariat-Clerk and was credited with ambitions to ministerial rank. It may be interesting to compare the narrative methods of Dickens and Carlyle, and the following extracts from Carlyle's book may assist the reader : " Foulon, grown grey in treachery ; ' âme damnée du Parlement ' . . . ' the people may eat grass ' " (I, III, ix). " As for old Foulon, one learns that he is dead ; at least, ' a sumptuous funeral ' is going on, the undertakers honouring him if no other will " (I, v, viii). " It suddenly appears that old Foulon is alive . . . merciless boors pounce on him like hell-hounds . . . his old head which seventy-four years have bleached, is bare ; they have tied an emblematic bundle of grass on his back ; a garland of nettles and thistles is round his neck ; in this manner led with ropes, goaded on with curses and menaces must he, with old limbs, sprawl forward ; the pitiablest, most unpitied of all old men . . . With wild yells Sansculottism clutches him in its hundred hands ; he is whirled across the Place de Grêve to the Lanterne, Lamp-iron which there is at the corner of the Rue de la Vannerie pleading bitterly for life—to the deaf winds. Only with the third rope—for two ropes broke, and the quivering voice still pleads—can he be so much as got hanged ! His body is dragged through the streets ; his Head goes aloft on a pike, the mouth filled with grass ; amid sounds as of a Tophet from a grass-eating people " (I, v, ix).

CHAPTER XXIII

1. DUST HE WAS. The mender of roads seems, from his occupation, a very fit subject for the application of the curse on Adam : " In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken ; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return " (Gen. iii, 19).

2. FLINT AND STEEL. The common method of obtaining light (or fire) at the period. Thirty or forty years were to elapse before matches were to become available.

3. INDIFFERENT TO SHOWERS. A curious mixture of weather conditions is noticeable ; the man slept on through showers of hail during the day and in the evening the rain ran wildly and beat down ; yet between the two wet periods as he went home the dust went by him according to the set of the wind.

4. TOCSIN. An alarm-bell. The word is French and was in ancient times " toquesing." Dickens uses it, as does Carlyle, to stress the dramatic side of the Revolution : " They ring the Church bells by way of tocsin ; and the Parish turns out to the work " (I, VI, viii).

CHAPTER XXIV

1. DRAWN TO THE LOADSTONE ROCK. Loadstone or lodestone (leading stone) is magnetic iron ore that has the power of attracting (or leading) bits of iron, and from it the earliest magnets were made. By the uneducated and

credulous it was credited with the ability of attracting other things than iron, and so arose its figurative use as any attractive force, and this is the meaning of its power over Darnay.

2. FABLED RUSTIC. The wealth of illustration drawn from folk-lore and superstition in this chapter will be noted : (1) the fabled rustic who raised the devil, (2) saying the Lord's Prayer backwards, (3) Lucifer's pride, (4) Sardanapalus's luxury, (5) the mole's blindness, (6) sprinkling salt on tails of eagles.

3. SARDANAPALUS. A legendary Assyrian king noteworthy for his luxury and voluptuousness.

4. MOLE'S BLINDNESS. The mole is not, of course, blind, but its eyes are so inconspicuous as to be almost invisible.

5. PRISON OF THE ABBAYE. One of the " seven prisons in Paris, full of aristocrats " (Carlyle, III, I, iv). Its site is now covered by the Boulevard St. Germain.

6. GABELLE. Is it a coincidence that Dickens gives this name to the Postmaster and Tax-gather ? Gabelle is the French name for the much hated salt-tax ; it was swept away by the Revolution in 1789.

7. AUGUST 14TH. The significance of Dickens's choice of this historical date for Darnay's departure from England needs only to be pointed out to be appreciated. Darnay's fate is sealed in advance, as will be seen in the next chapter.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

1. REPUBLIC ONE . . . " On all housetops flicker little tricolor Flags, their flagstaff a Pike and Liberty Cap ; on all house-walls—for no Patriot not suspect will be behind another—there stand printed these words : ' *Republic One and Indivisible ; Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or Death* ' " (Carlyle, III, IV, iv).

2. ROUGH RED CAPS. These were the so-called Caps of Liberty. The pattern was similar to that of the head-dress worn by manumitted slaves in ancient Phrygia. " Note, too, how the Jacobin Brethren are mounting new symbolical head-gear, the Woollen Cap or nightcap, *bonnet de laine*, better known as *bonnet rouge*, the colour being *red*. A thing one wears not only by way of Phrygian Cap-of-Liberty, but also for convenience-sake, and then also in compliment to the Lower-Class-Patriots and Bastille Heroes " (Carlyle, II, v, ix).

3. LA FORCE. This prison had been for debtors until the Revolutionaries used it for the confinement (temporary and preparatory to execution) of aristocrats. It was in a turning off the Rue St. Antoine.

4. SANDED IT. A reminder that until absorbent blotting paper became common, writing ink was usually dried by sprinkling upon it sand from a dredger.

5. SHARP FEMALE. Carlyle says : " Levity christens by a feminine derivative name as if it were his daughter, La Guillotine ; ' with my machine, Messieurs, I whisk off your head in a twinkling and you have no pain,' whereat they laugh " (I, IV, iv). " Sainte-Guillotine, meseems, is worse than the old Saints of Superstition ; a man-devouring Saint " (III, VI, i). So sharp is this instrument that its name has been given to the knife used by book manufacturers for shearing off edges of paper ; surgeons use it for some of their instruments, and in Parliament it is used in a figurative sense for a motion curtailing discussion.

CHAPTER II

1. TELLSON'S BANK. This is the first mention of the address of Tellson's ; the Saint Germain Quarter was in the aristocratic part of the city adjacent to the Latin Quarter. The site is marked on modern maps by the Boulevard Saint Germain.

CHAPTER IV

1. THE NEW ERA BEGAN. The Republican Calendar was introduced on October 5th, 1793. Carlyle's description of it is interesting and amusing

(see III, iv, iv) : it will be sufficient here to give his picturesque translation of the French names of the " twelve equal months of Thirty Days."

Autumn	Vendémiare	Vintagearious.	September-October.
	Brumaire	Fogarious.	October-November.
	Frimaire	Frostarious.	November-December.
Winter	Nivose	Snowous.	December-January.
	Pluviose	Rainous.	January-February.
	Ventose	Windous.	February-March.
Spring	Germinal	Buddal.	March-April.
	Floréal	Floweral.	April-May.
	Prairial	Meadowal.	May-June.
Summer	Messidor	Reapidor*.	June-July.
	Thermidor	Heatidor.	July-August.
	Fructidor	Fruitidor.	August-September.

3. EVENING AND MORNING. A repetition of the picture of Creation in Genesis i, 5 : " And GOD called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night ; and the evening and the morning were the first day."

4. HEAD OF THE KING. Louis XVI was guillotined on January 21st, 1793.

5. EIGHT WEARY MONTHS. Queen Marie Antoinette was guillotined on October 16th, 1793.

Chapter V

1. POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY SONG. There were two popular songs of the Revolution, Ça ira and La Carmagnole. Of the first Carlyle writes : " French Hope sees only the birth struggles of a new unspeakably better Society and sings, with full assurance of faith, her brisk melody which some inspired fiddler has in these very days [1789] composed for her—the world-famous Ça ira ; Yes, ' that will go ' " (II, i, vi). The words, replete with bloodthirsty sentiments, were by Ladié, a street-singer, and the air by Bècorer, a side-drummer at the Opera. The other and later song is that used by Dickens, " La Carmagnole," which originated in a popular tune from Provence, and got its name from the short jacket (carmagnola) worn by workmen from Carmagnola in Italy. It appeared about August, 1792, and immediately became extremely popular. Dickens's exciting description of the lewd and extravagant dance accompanying the song is very graphic, but not more realistic than Carlyle's translation of a passage from Mercier's *Tableau de Paris* : " Mad multitudes [outside the church of St. Eustache] dancing round the bonfire of Chapel-balustrades, of Priests' and Canons' Stalls ; and the dancers—I exaggerate nothing—the dancers nigh bare of breeches, neck and breast naked, stockings down, went whirling and spinning, like those Dust-vortexes, forerunners of Tempest and Destruction " (III, v, iv). Many sets of verses were written to the tune ; one of the verses runs :

" Oui, je suis sans culotte, moi,
En dépit des amis du roi.
Vive les Marseillois.
Les Bretons et nos lois."

Chapter VI

1. SHORT AND THE LONG OF IT. The early form of the more usual modern version : " the long and the short of it." Dickens uses both readings ; in *Oliver Twist*, Ch. XX, Nancy says : " The short and the long of what you mean " ; and in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Ch. XXVII, is " the long and the short of it is . . . " An ancient instance is to be found in " Damon " (1571) included in Hazlitt's Old Plays : " Howsoever it be, this is the short and long."

2. CONCIERGERIE. This prison is within the precincts of the Palais de Justice to the west of Nôtre Dame Cathedral on the Ile de la Cité. " This night to the Conciergerie : through the Palais misnamed *of Justice*, to the Guillotine to-morrow " (Carlyle, III, vi, v). " Languid this Tribunal is not " (III, i, i). The Conciergerie is the best preserved of all the Parisian relics of the Revolution. It was used by the Revolutionists for the confinement of political prisoners awaiting execution.

* Dor is Greek for gift.

Chapter VIII

1. GOOD REPUBLICAN BRUTUS. An appropriate sign for the wine-shop, recalling the Marcus Brutus who had assassinated the Roman Emperor, Julius Caesar.

2. SPENCER. Part of the uniform of the newly-formed Revolutionary Army: "Red night-cap, tricolor waistcoat, black-shag spencer, black-shag trousers, with enormous mustachios, enormous sabre—*carmagnole complète*" (Carlyle, III, v, iii).

3. DUCKED TO DEATH. Ducking as a legal punishment lasted from Saxon times till the eighteenth century, the latest record of the use of the ducking-stool being 1809. It was usually the punishment for scolding wives or dishonest tradesmen; sometimes the mob took the administration of "justice" into their own hands, as Barsad feared.

Chapter IX

1. CANNOT SARSE THE GOOSE AND NOT THE GANDER. An ingenious twist (quite in the Cruncher manner) of the old saying: "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander"; treat them both alike—whichever bird you eat, you serve the same sauce or seasoning.

2. THE GUILLOTINE. NOT ILL. This is direct from Carlyle: "The Guillotine goes not ill" (III, v, ii).

3. NO PRAYERS WERE SAID. Religion was suppressed and the churches desecrated and defiled in November, 1793. "The Church of Saint-Eustache"—Carlyle is quoting from Mercier—"offered the spectacle of a great tavern. The interior of the Choir represented a landscape decorated with cottages and boskets of trees. Round the Choir stood tables overloaded with bottles, with sausages, pork-puddings, pastries and other meats . . ." (III, v, vi). In the same year, 1793, Nôtre Dame itself became a "Temple of Reason," the inauguration service being "childish and repulsive mockeries" of the stately Roman Catholic ritual.

Chapter X

1. I, ALEXANDER MANETTE. Dickens's device of a hidden letter written by a Bastille prisoner is justified by an extract from Carlyle (I, v, vii): At the storming of the Bastille "Old secrets come to view; and long-buried Despair finds voice. Read this portion of an old letter [dated à la Bastille, 7 Octobre, 1752, signed Quéret-Démery]: 'If for my consolation, Monseigneur would grant me for the sake of God and the Most Blessed Trinity, that I could have news of my dear wife; were it only her name on a card, to shew that she is alive. It were the greatest consolation I could receive; and I should for ever bless the greatness of Monseigneur."

2. STREET OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE. The Rue de l'Ecole de Médicine runs to the south of the celebrated institution and parallel to the Boulevard St. Germain.

3. PUTTING UP THE STEPS. Shewing that the gentlemen were "people of position." Had they been persons without servants, the steps of the carriage would have been so made that they could be drawn up from inside the carriage.

Chapter XI

1. FORLORN HOPE. Forlorn means lost, deserted, abandoned. Forlorn hope was originally a military term for an expedition or undertaking of such danger that its success is hopeless from the start. First applied, in the Roman army, to the skirmishers, who were almost certainly to be killed, preceding the main body of troops.

Chapter XIII

1. SAINTE GUILLOTINE. For the feminine gender (it was invented by a man, Dr. Guillotin), see *ante* Bk. III, Ch. I, note 5. The machine was erected in the Place de la Révolution, now Place de la Concorde, in 1792, and between that time and 1795 (except for six weeks in 1794) 2,800 persons were executed.

2. COME THEN, MY CHILDREN. This too literal translation of the French,

" Venez donc, mes enfants," is a little misleading. Enfant is used in ordinary conversation for " good fellow," " companion," etc. It is quite usual for military commanders to address their troops, or for a foreman or employer to address his workers as " mes enfants."

3. OUT OF THE LITTLE WINDOW. This dreadful little window is the circular opening left when the two boards of the guillotine come together; it accommodates the victim's neck.

CHAPTER XIV

1. BED-WINCHES. Properly bed-wrenches; tools for operating the screws of a bedstead.

2. CROSSING THE BRIDGE. This would be necessary for Miss Pross to arrive at the Cathedral door where she was to meet Jerry, as Nôtre Dame stands on an island.

CHAPTER XV

1. TUMBRELS. The oddly-named two-wheeled vehicles so closely associated with criminals, got their name, which is French, because they were originally used for farm work; the contents of the cart, usually manure or farm-soil of some sort, could be " tumbled out " by tipping up the body of the vehicle. (Fr., tombereau, a tumble-cart.)

BLEAK HOUSE AND THE CRITICS

THE special study which we in the Fellowship have given to *Bleak House* this season has, naturally, brought the book into more than usual prominence amongst us. Or do I imagine that? Quite likely the publicity afforded the novel by the admirable broadcast version, noticed in the March number,* has helped to create that impression. It has, in any case, set at least one reader wondering what effect this new study of an old friend has had upon individual members and how far their former estimates of the book have been modified.

Bleak House has come in for a lot of praise these last few months, but was this always so? Many times when discussing Dickens with people for whom he has but a limited appeal, this particular book has been singled out as dry, heavy, stodgy and I know not what. Among professed Dickensians there are many who number it among their favourites and also many who assert that it is by no means in the first flight of its author's best work. And what of the established critics? Are they in accord or do they agree to differ like the rest of us?

I hope that to bring a few of their opinions together will not be without interest and profit.

To begin with, it is quite pertinent to estimate the opinion of Dickens's comtemporaries by recalling that the sales of the original monthly parts soared above those of its immediate predecessor, *David Copperfield*, its author's " favourite child "; a fact that possibly caused Dickens as much chagrin as pleasure. Those larger figures are certainly surprising—" beating dear old Copperfield by a round thousand or so."

First let us turn to Forster (1873) who points out the handicap Dickens imposed upon himself in casting so much of the book in the form of a narrative by its heroine, in which he was so very much less successful than in the case of the autobiographical Copperfield, and then adds: " The novel is nevertheless, in the important particular of construction, perhaps the best thing done by Dickens." In the long criticism that follows he does not show any very special enthusiasm

*See page 65.

for the work, and says that the pathetic parts of it do not live largely in the remembrance, but he praises several of them, for example: "The deaths of Richard and of Gridley, the wandering fancies of Miss Flite and the extremely touching way in which the gentleman-nature of the pompous baronet, Dedlock, asserts itself under suffering, belong to a high order of writing. There is another most affecting example, taking the lead of the rest, in the poor street-sweeper Jo; which has made perhaps as deep an impression as anything in Dickens."

Sir A. W. Ward, in 1882, thought that Forster's estimate of Dickens's constructive skill in *Bleak House* excessive although a great advance on all his earlier books in that respect. He attributes this not only to the influence of Wilkie Collins but also to the criticism of contemporary literature, in which Dickens was then so deeply immersed in *Household Words*, and emphasises the fact that in this book the author first emancipated himself from the eighteenth century favourites which hitherto had been his models. It is interesting to see Ward, even at that date, defending Dickens against the familiar charge that he could not depict a gentleman. He claimed that *Bleak House* supplies the complete refutation. This is based not on Sir Leicester but on Richard whose story is told, in the opinion of this critic, "in a way unsurpassed." Yes, Ward is particularly interesting to the student of *Bleak House*.

In 1887, F. T. Marzials wrote: "It is a fine work of art unquestionably, a very fine work of art—the canvas crowded with living figures and yet the main lines of the composition well-ordered and harmonious." Then in reference to Lady Dedlock: "Once again has Dickens dwelt, not on the passionate side of wrongful love, but on its sorrow."

Advancing to the end of the century, the outstanding critical figure was George Gissing (1897) who says the book is "constructed only too well" and he instances it in condemning Dickens for his "abuse of coincidence." Notwithstanding: "with an end not worth attaining, the author wrought successfully. The story is child's play compared with many invented, for instance, by Wilkie Collins; but in combination with Dickens's genuine powers, it produces its designed effect; we move in a world of choking fog and squalid pitfalls, amid plot and counter-plot, cold self-interest and passion overwrought and can never refuse attention to the magician who shows it all."

Then, coming to the present century, in 1908 Edwin Pugh thought that: "Apart from its technical excellences, *Bleak House* marks a sharp decline in Dickens's power if not exactly in his art. And yet, in many ways, it is one of the most wonderful, as perhaps it is the most clever (and the word is used advisedly) of all his books. Considering its bulk and the multiplicity of its characters, it is extraordinarily well balanced. . . . Nevertheless, and to be done with this devil of a carping propensity, even Esther's Narrative serves its purpose better than at first appears, in that it supplies a still, small strain of tenderness to the harsh Wagnerian music of the main theme."

In our own day we have Bernard Darwin who, as always, has illuminating things to say and at least one surprising remark on the subject of Jo. "In *Bleak House* the craftsmanship is plain enough, but the spontaneity has declined. The story is contrived with much art. From the moment we begin with the Court of Chancery in a fog, Chancery gets its grip on the story and never relaxes it. That is truly masterly, and, in a smaller way, there is much skill in the hints and clues thrown out here and there which shall make us guess at Lady Dedlock's secret and her fate long before we know them. The steps on the ghost's walk, Hortense shoeless through the wet grass, every movement of Mr. Tulkinghorn, would be admirably devised if only we cared a little more about Lady Dedlock. . . . Jo afterwards made effective pathos in a melodrama for a very skilful actress, Miss Jenny

Lee, and that, taking him at his highest, seems to-day all that he is good for. However, a Dean (Dean Ramsay) thought his death was equal to anything in English fiction. Undoubtedly Jo was popular in his day and helped to make popular a very fine book that would have been much better without him."

It may be remembered that another modern critic, James Agate, stated a year or so ago, that he would rather have written the death of Jo than anything else he could think of.

Then there is H. C. Dent (1933) who wrote: "... certainly the best constructed novel Dickens had so far written ... builds up step by step, with unflinching realism, an absolutely complete picture of a chaotic muddle. He writes with conscious art and employs every ounce of his skill as a novelist."

Then the greatest Dickensian critic of them all, G. K. Chesterton. It is difficult to quote from him; as is true in another sphere he "cannot be tasted in a sip," a simile, one ventures to think, that would not displease G.K.C. However, the attempt must be made, else the balance of our little paper will be sadly awry. "*Bleak House* is not certainly Dickens's best book, but perhaps it is his best novel. Such a distinction is not a mere verbal trick; it has to be remembered rather constantly in connection with his work. This particular story represents the highest point of his intellectual maturity ... Dickens begins in the Chancery fog because he means to end in the Chancery fog. He did not begin in the Chuzzlewit wind because he meant to end in it; he began it because it was a good beginning. This is perhaps the best short way of stating the peculiarity of *Bleak House*." Almost every character is introduced because of his or her usefulness to his all-absorbing theme. "There is the *motif* and again the *motif*. Almost everything is calculated to assert and reassert the savage morality of Dickens's protest against a particular social evil. The whole theme is that which another Englishman as jovial as Dickens defined shortly as the law's delay. The fog of the first chapter never lifts."

In selecting these few quotations I have not attempted to summarise the views of these eminent men but I hope that they have reminded my readers of the wealth of critical lore that is available and how little of it is without real interest. In conclusion I have selected a passage from a favourite topographer who for me sums up this great book as almost no one else has done—Beresford Chancellor (1924): "The London of *Bleak House* is largely atmospheric—that is to say that in its pages we have rather a general sense of metropolitan places than that topographical exactness concerning them which is to be found in some of Dickens's other books. But so wonderfully realistic is the way the city is made to pervade the work, that it seems to stand out from the novels, in a general way, as containing a more life-like delineation of London than almost any of them. Chancery Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields and the many Inns of Court and little streets in the vicinity, bulk so largely in the story, that just as Pickwick may be described as a picture of convivial London and *Our Mutual Friend* as a picture of riverside London—so *Bleak House* stands as the last word on the legal London of its period. ... In many respects it is one of its writer's most interesting productions; and if to-day, one finds oneself walking about London on a specially murky day or bewildered by one of its own particular fogs, it is *Bleak House* one conjures up and that remarkable word picture with which the book opens."

L.C. S.

THE WEATHER

By J. H. McNULTY

I

TO the superior person the weather appears a trite, trivial, commonplace subject unfit for polite conversation; such an opinion is, however, hopelessly wrong and shows a lamentable ignorance of English literature. If talking about the weather is so bad, writing about it can be little better, and our literature is full of magnificent descriptions of weather. Ruskin's "Modern Painters" has many such descriptions, and they are passages of almost unsurpassable beauty. If the lazy reader shrinks from reading the great work in five volumes, he may find many of these passages in a little book, "Frondes Agrestes." That should be sufficient to convince anyone, but it is not half the story; let us continue. Conrad's "Typhoon" is a magnificent study of rough weather, one of the finest chapters in "Richard Feverel" has for its setting a great thunderstorm and if that is not enough, turn to Shakespeare. Here we have the storm in "King Lear" and the apostrophe to sleep in the second part of "Henry IV":

> ". . . Sleep, gentle sleep,
> Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
> That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down, . . .
> Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
> Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
> In cradle of the rude imperious surge;
> And in the visitation of the winds
> Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
> Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
> With deaf'ning clamours in the slippery clouds,
> That with the hurly, death itself awakes?"

It would be worth suffering the discomforts of a sleepless night if it would enable us to write poetry like that. Here is our apologia, now see how Dickens has used weather for the adornment of his stories. Three kinds particularly seem to have appealed to him, judging from the frequency with which he uses them, a high wind, a snowfall and a great fog.

Pride of place must be given to the great storm in *David Copperfield* of which Ruskin said "There is nothing in sea description detailed like Dickens's storm at the death of Ham." It begins with a description of the sky. "Don't you think that," I asked the coachman, in the first stage out of London, "a very remarkable sky? I don't remember to have seen one like it."

"Nor I, not equal to it," he replied. "That's wind, sir. There'll be mischief done at sea, I expect, before long."

"It was a murky confusion—here and there blotted with a colour like the colour of the smoke from damp fuel—of flying clouds, tossed up into most remarkable heaps, suggesting greater heights in the clouds than there were depths below them to the bottom of the deepest hollows in the earth, through which the wild moon seemed to plunge headlong, as if, in a dread disturbance of the laws of nature, she had lost her way and were frightened. There had been a wind all day; and it was rising then, with an extraordinary great sound. In another hour it had much increased, and the sky was more overcast, and it blew hard."

Near the beginning of *Martin Chuzzlewit* just as the sun went down a wind arose which made the fire at the forge roar and "bade the shining sparks dance gaily to the merry clinking of the hammers on

the anvil," slammed his front door against Mr. Pecksniff, and knocked him down ; and again towards the end of the book he is knocked down again and this time by old Martin Chuzzlewit. On the whole, however, this was a merry wind quite unlike that sinister wind which blew on that dark night when young Martin and Mark Tapley were on their way to America, the wind that crept along the ground, and stopped to listen, and went rustling on, and stopped again, and followed like a savage on the trail.

Out at sea it was worse, the threats had become realities. Indeed, the whole passage is worthy to be placed beside the great storm in *David Copperfield.*

In our temperate clime free from the most disastrous effects of earthquakes and hurricane, the most terrifying of Nature's manifestations is a thunderstorm and this is used in *Martin Chuzzlewit* as a prelude to the murder of Montague Tigg.

" It was one of those hot, silent nights, when people sit at their windows listening for the thunder which they know will shortly break; when they recall dismal tales of hurricanes and earthquakes ; and of lonely travellers on open plains, and lonely ships at sea, struck by lightning. Lightning flashed and quivered on the black horizon even now ; and hollow murmurings were in the wind as though it had been blowing where the thunder rolled and still was charged with its exhausted echoes. But the storm, though gathering swiftly, had not yet come up ; and the prevailing stillness was the more solemn, from the dull intelligence that seemed to hover in the air, of noise and conflict afar off. It was very dark ; but in the murky sky there were masses of cloud which shone with a lurid light, like monstrous heaps of copper that had been heated in a furnace, and were growing cold."

There is another thunderstorm in *The Old Curiosity Shop,* and in Chapter XV an exquisite passage on the morning light.

II

The second kind of weather loved by Dickens is snow. Now snow is not popular with Londoners, and the reasons are clear. The cold is rarely severe enough to keep the snow solid and dry, and the heavy traffic soon beats it into a brown freezing liquid, and what remains on roofs, ledges and gardens is quickly smudged by the dirt of a great city, besides there are other discomforts of belated trains and cold carriages. Yet, despite all this, snow is the most beautiful of natural phenomena, and has added enormously to the sum of human happiness. Many thousands go to Switzerland to enjoy that king of sports, skiing, which without snow is unthinkable.

Snow transforms the drabbest landscape into a fairyland of beauty. It brings a picture of spring into winter's darkest days turning every tree into a hawthorn in full bloom, or fruit tree at the time of blossoming. The shadows on snow are dim blue, like the dreams of sleeping violets below. It makes a kind of enforced sabbath putting a stop to many outdoor activities, and bringing a great silence. Longfellow has beautifully described the sound of falling snow :

> " He heard the footsteps of falling snow
> Like the footsteps of descending angels."

Whittier writes his charming " Snowbound " and Francis Thompson the exquisite " To a Snow Flake " while Russell Lowell in his admirable essay " A Good Word for Winter " collects tributes from many poets and adds his own. But there is another side to the matter, it is winter and snow that makes home—sweet home

> " I crown thee King of intimate delights,
> Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness."

writes Cowper. This is perfectly expressed in the introduction to the story of Gabriel Grub:

"How it snows!" said one of the men, in a low tone.

"Snows, does it?" said Wardle.

"Rough, cold night, sir," replied the man; "and there's a wind got up, that drifts it across the fields, in a thick white cloud."

"What does Jem say?" enquired the old lady. "There ain't anything the matter, is there?"

"No, no, mother," replied Wardle; "he says there's a snow-drift, and a wind that's piercing cold. I should know that, by the way it rumbles in the chimney."

"Ah!" said the old lady, "there was just such a wind, and just such a fall of snow, a good many years back, I recollect—just five years before your poor father died. It was Christmas Eve, too; and I remember that on that very night he told us the story about the goblins that carried away old Gabriel Grub."

This is a perfect introduction, the ruddy glow from the fire inside, and the wind howling without, with the snow piling little snow castles on the window sill, and beating on the panes of glass.

In a *Christmas Carol* there is one delightful snow picture:—

"The house fronts looked black enough, and the windows blacker, contrasting with the smooth white sheet of snow upon the roofs, and with the dirtier snow upon the ground . . . . .

"There was nothing very cheerful in the climate or the town, yet was there an air of cheerfulness abroad that the clearest summer air, and the brightest summer sun might have endeavoured to diffuse in vain."

The cheerfulness here is due chiefly to the Christmas spirit, but snow also puts the spirit of youth into everything, and one must be very old indeed who does not feel something of lightheartedness at the beauty of a heavy snowfall. What a splendid appetiser a walk in the snow is, as Tom Pinch and young Martin found when they dined with John Westlock. One might think they did not need it, after the spare diet at Pecksniff's, and with such a banquet before them, nor should we need anything to stimulate our appetites to-day, but the book was written in days of plenty and our well-fed ancestors, filled with good things, might require something to whet their appetites, so Dickens provides both meal and appetiser.

Rain and wind have much the same effect as snow in increasing the charm of the fireside and the comfort of the warm, brightly-lighted parlour. It was the battling with the wind and rain on Marlborough Downs that made the lights of the inn so attractive to Tom Smart.

Barnaby Rudge begins in the Maypole Inn. Outside there is the dark forest, the wind and the rain. Inside, by the flickering light, "which made the old room, with its heavy timbers and panelled walls, look as if it were built of polished ebony—the wind roaring and howling without, now rattling the latch and creaking the hinges of the stout oaken door, and now driving at the casement as though it would beat it in—by this light, and under circumstances so auspicious, Solomon Daisy began his tale." The scene has changed but little; there is the inn, the King's Head, opposite is the church and the ancient forest, Epping Forest, London's forest, a forest so ancient that compared with it the New Forest is a mere parvenu among woodlands. Epping Forest does not date from William the Norman (a far better name from our point of view than the Conqueror), it was there long before he came. Loughton Camp is British, not Norman or Roman, Boadicea was defeated close by: such is the antiquity of this noble woodland; though only about ten miles from the city of London, sphagnum moss may be found there and a fly-catching plant near Connaught Water.

III

Fog seems to be Dickens's favourite weather, and this is or was, a characteristic feature of our city. It nullifies the effects of the Daylight Savings Act, by shortening the hours of daylight sometimes reducing them almost to vanishing point.

The Carol begins on Christmas Eve with a great fog, which makes an effective contrast to the "clear, bright, jovial stirring cold of Christmas Day;" with its "golden sunlight; Heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; and merry bells."

The fog with which *Bleak House* opens is the greatest of all, but one far less known and almost as good is to be found in *Our Mutual Friend*. "It was a foggy day in London, and the fog was heavy and dark. Animate London, with smarting eyes and irritated lungs, was blinking, wheezing, and choking; inanimate London was a sooty spectre, divided in purpose between being visible and invisible, and so being wholly neither. Gaslights flared in the shops with a haggard and unblest air, as knowing themselves to be night-creatures that had no business abroad under the sun; while the sun itself, when it was for a few moments dimly indicated through circling eddies of fog, showed as if it had gone out, and were collapsing flat and cold. Even in the surrounding country it was a foggy day, but there the fog was grey, whereas in London it was, about the boundary line, dark yellow, and a little within it brown, and then browner, and then browner, until at the heart of the City—which call St. Mary Axe—it was rusty black." Mr. Guppy would have called it a "London particular."

Our first sight of Todgers's is in a fog. "There was a dense fog, too, as if it (London) was a city in the clouds; . . . . . and there was a thick crust upon the pavement like oil-cake, which, one of the outsides (mad, no doubt), said to another (his keeper, of course), was snow."

Let us in memory of a life-long acquaintance sing

An Ode to Fog

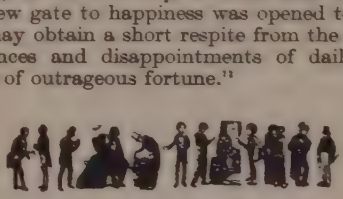
Most lovely fog, though some have called thee
Ugly and dreadful, yet thou art not so.
While Smoke Abatement plots thine overthrow,
And Coal gives place to Electricity,
Yet we who dwell by London's smoky dome
Take thee as part and parcel of our home.

Beneath thy calm and cool and gentle sway
London's great feverous heart grows soft and mild;
'Buses and Taxis wend their wand'ring way
As peacefully and slowly as a child
That's learnt to walk, but not as yet to run,
And night comes on before the day's begun.

Thy rich gold orange colour makes us think
Of luscious oranges from sunny Spain.
The semi-twilight causes us to blink,
But Fancy's flight no darkness can restrain.
The tawny air reminds us in some sort
Of the delicious taste of tawny Port.

The trains go by, so stately, sad and slow,
Thick fog enshrouds the signals' misty tops,
Great smuts are falling like black flakes of snow,
The railway's like an organ—full of stops—
And there is music floating all around
'Tis the fog-signals' loud and martial sound.

In general there is in Dickens less about summer weather than winter, and the reason may be that the ideal summer weather, for most people, is that without incident, a long succession of cloudless skies with only occasional showers to freshen the country and clean the dusty cities ; but there are few things more trying than too much sun, and a drought, and this may explain some of the relief readers feel, when Clennam leaves the blazing sun of Marseilles and returns to London on a wet Sunday night, though at such a time the city looks its worst. There are, however, some days when the sun should shine and one of these is the thirteenth of May, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, for on that day the Pickwickians started on their journeys and a new gate to happiness was opened to the world and a place where we may obtain a short respite from the thousand and one troubles, annoyances and disappointments of daily life, " and the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."



ON BEING WITHOUT DICKENS

By RUTH WHITTAKER

I WISH the people who periodically ask what books should furnish a desert island would produce a Dickens Omnibus of reasonable dimensions. Choosing, from my own books, which to take with me on leaving home, I embraced, with a thankful heart for her compactness, all Jane Austen, together with " Alice," a Bible, Shakespeare, " Cranford " and a few others. But when it came to my first loves, I ruefully surveyed the twenty-one fat blue volumes of Dickens, and the dozen or so fat red and gold volumes of E. Nesbit, and could do nothing but resolve to buy duplicates at the first possible moment. That moment has not yet come and here am I writing an essay on Dickens with only an old notebook. (True, there are the public libraries, but they seem to think Dickens is read only by champion weight-lifters.)

In the meantime, for want of Dickens I undergo grinding torments. Names of characters flash into my mind, with no bodies attached to them : bodies with no names ; names and bodies with no background. Who was Bully Sawyer ? He sounds like a friend of the Game Chicken. And Mrs. Bellows ? A relation of Mrs. Pardiggle ? Where shall I find *One of the Roughs* ? And *the beadle who boiled a boy* ? A vague face in a tablespoon haunts me incessantly.

As Miss Peecher in her sums reflects Bradley Headstone, so I Dickens. Asked in some radio quiz to name the Seven Dwarfs, I try instead to name the Kenwigses, the Misses Tapkins, Boffin's Misers. With poor results. Unable to sleep, I try to count, not sheep but the leaves in the Veneering table, the guests at Mrs. Leo Hunter's garden party or at the select swarry, and someone always turns up at the wrong affair. Smorltork I think is safe at Eatanswill, but should Snuffanuff go to Bath or Rochester ? At other times I struggle to recite once-known passages, to find them coming out as strangely as Alice's crocodile. I try to recall the figures in Mrs. Jarley's waxworks and wonder which modern celebrities I shall find amongst them when I get to heaven ; which raises another knotty point : will the well-drawn bad characters go to heaven, and the Rose Maylies to the other place ?

In more pugnacious mood I chew over an old grievance against Dickens concerning Mrs. Jellyby and the woman question, and have ferocious arguments in which, with the aid of Florence Nightingale and Barbara Ward, I utterly confound both Dickens and Joad, finally knocking their heads so violently together that one of them (I won't say which) cracks.

Again, hearing the corduroyed intelligentsia of Hampstead disdainfully scorning everything British, I feel, not for the first time, that Podsnappery has much to commend it. But it is hard to be grateful when my King and country decide that nothing less than my presence in the lower ranks of the Circumlocution Office will win the war. For that noble edifice, I find, has not improved with time. Tite Barnacle has decreed that I, with hundreds of others, should spend my time in putting the mystic symbol XW on thousands of grubby carriers' notes; I find myself wondering how Young Blight would have coped with the situation and how long it will be before I too join the majority of Circumlocutants who assist the war effort by solving crossword puzzles, an invention denied to Young Blight. Going down, at scheduled times, to the canteen which appears to have the intention of poisoning me with its food and drink, I wonder what the entirely foreign canteen staff would say if I demanded, instead, *three pennorth o' rum.*

Although I no longer, as in my youth, cut out every newspaper reference to Dickens and his characters, I still pounce on them avidly. Even a passing reference to Montague Tigg in *Itma* is welcome. The announcement that *Bleak House* is to be broadcast cheers my loneliness, but I am disappointed, for the instalments are nearly all Esther, whom I do not like. Later, after visiting "Emma" at the St. James's Theatre, my heart is torn to shreds by James Agate, who quotes Dickens at Jane Austen's expense. "WhichImeantersayPipolechap," is mean.

Turning to my battered little notebook for inspiration, I find it tantalisingly scrappy. There are over forty pages each bearing the title of a proposed Dickens essay, generally followed by suggested subject matter, in some cases too vague to be identified. Some of the titles indeed, speak for themselves—*Micawberitis* and *Petticoat Modesty*, for instance—but what was *A Summer Joke*? and what, oh what, is *Tombatism*? Another page says boldly, *Be a Plum.* Possibly nearly twenty years ago I really wanted to be a plum, but not now.

Naturally there have been changes of front with the passing of time. An appalling tendency to pathos and sermonising has worn itself out; subjects which were then "also rans" now strike a deeper chord in the human heart—*The Gospel according to Monotony* for instance.

This notebook also contains advice (doomed to be ignored) intended to keep me to the strait and narrow path: "Think!" it says sternly, "Bring to bear on the matter in hand your own relevant experience to support or contradict; seek to suppress your own emotionalised opinions." I wonder if a sudden reference to *Wet, Dried* and *Fried Fish* on a page of "Little Shops" is a relevant experience or a quotation from Dickens? It can hardly be an emotionalised opinion, suppressed, for I am not bothered in that way; my emotions, being of the small beer variety, work out easily, like spots. The whole position is confused by a habit of recording not only the pearls which fall from Dickens's own lips, but other jewels, unidentified. Thus on a page of dogs, between Diogenes and Pointer, I find a pup who, failing to win a prize at a dog show, allows himself to be painted yellow and trained up a stick, winning first prize at a Chrysanthemum show. And if that is in Dickens I'll eat Mr. Grimwig's hat.

Absorption in Dickens, is, alas, occasionally broken to make way for drives in other directions: a constantly recurring signpost says MUST FINISH TESS, and there are many notes for a far-fetched comparison of Dickens with Hardy, whom I cannot love, involving the question *Was Hardy a Pessimist* ? immediately followed by the statement *See me and be sick* which does not encourage further investigation. There are, too, a few loose press cuttings of Miss Havishamish life stories, and amongst them a stray which asks impertinently *Have you a scraggy neck* and another, just as helpful but with more tact, tells of *Foods that Fatten*. And there are occasional lapses into petty expenses, recalling forgotten rambles, and dearly remembered names—Rust, Wickens, Gadd, Warren, Dexter . . .

It is depressing to think of the many papers I meant to write, which will now never come to life. It seems a pity to waste so much effort; do you think if I strung them all together, omitting all verbs and intelligibilities, with a nice network of sewers and plenty of Mr. Middleton's favourite commodity, I might produce a modern novel ? Or if it is not long enough or vague enough for that, perhaps, chopped into uneven pieces, with punctuation and spelling all wrong, it would do for a Modern Poem ?

I	II
nemo n oone	Give me blood
no dRAin sn	blood blOOD I
o soap	want summoor effoC
nothing on	very tasty very sweet
(On with Fi)	(but not before Mrs. Boffin)
not a bachelor's button	Discipline must be maintained.
or A SMall weed.	LisnBUD lisn
Use goomchoom	ShnotenGLISH soiTs
It's wiZARD.	Mightyfine
	Or would you rather be a fish

Cows are my Passion, Ladies' Reasons, Mutton Pies and Butterflies —all too ephemeral and superficial to write of in these troublous times. I wonder shall we ever again feel justified in taking life so leisurely and thinking so lightly ? And then I remember that Jane Austen wrote placidly through the Napoleonic wars, with daily fear of invasion—and hope that after all there may yet be room for a quiet little backwater where a Confiding Female may brood on Rumty's Perch.

THE WALTER DEXTER MEMORIAL FUND

Seven Pounds Five Shillings.—The proceeds of the sale of a set of Dickens's Works, presented anonymously.
Five Guineas.—Edinburgh Branch, Melbourne Branch, Sydney Branch.
Two Pounds Eight Shillings.—Pasadena Branch.
One Pound Ten Shillings.—Mrs. B. Robertson.
One Guinea.—Mr. Louis B. Frewer.
One Pound.—Mrs. M. E. Ford.
Ten Shillings.—Mr. J. Greaves, Mrs. C. H. Phillips, Mr. W. E. Rawnsley, Miss Ruth Whittaker.
Eight Shillings and Sixpence.—Mr. James McCurrah.
Five Shillings.—Mr. F. W. Ellis.
Five Dollars.—Marinette Branch.

Total to date, £333 3*s.* 4*d.*

MURDER MOST FOUL

By PHILIP CLAXTON WILLIAMS

I

MURDERS in Dickens's works are always of major importance. From the murder of Nancy to the obscure end of Edwin Drood, they have a nightmare quality that leaves an indelible mark on the imagination.

It is not hard to discover the reason. There seems to be something in the writing, an almost unbearable emotional intensity—familiar to confirmed Dickens readers—which serves to make each episode unforgettable.

In several of Dickens's murder scenes their effectiveness may be partly due to their being founded on crimes that had actually occurred. The tracing of such connections is interesting. With this end in view let us consider the crimes in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. It is safe to say that one, at least, is based on a real incident in criminal history.

Montague Tigg was born to be murdered ; being wholly unscrupulous, and having a vain belief that he was cleverer than anyone else. In spite of some points of divergence, his end is thought to have been founded on the notorious Radlett murder.

On October 24th, 1823, at 9 p.m., in Gill's Hill Lane, Radlett, in Hertfordshire, one William Weare, a shady solicitor of Lyons Inn, London, was murdered by some associates ; the motive may well have been revenge for some unfair transaction : all the men concerned subsisted mainly by gambling and card-playing.

The three murderers were Thurtell, Probert and Hunt. The first named—a Norwich man, well known in boxing circles—proposed a drive into the country one evening, indicating ironically that there would be " some shooting."

The four met, as arranged, at Radlett, and set off to Gills' Hill Lane, where Probert had a cottage. Weare and Thurtell occupied one gig, Probert and Hunt a second.

It proved to be Weare's last journey. When they had gone some distance Thurtell shot him, struck him with the pistol butt, and cut his throat. Then, with the help of the others, the body was concealed in a pond.

But Thurtell had left one of his pistols on the scene of the crime. The trio were soon arrested, and subsequently paid the supreme penalty. On account of its grizzly and macabre character, the murder was seized on by writers of sensational prose and verse. Of the latter the best known—though perhaps not the most outstanding—was the spirited quatrain :—

> My throat they cut from ear to ear
> My head they battered in.
> My name is Mr. William Weare
> I lived in Lyons Inn.

That Dickens knew of the case is certain,* and there are plain echoes of it in the murder of Montague Tigg, though Jonas committed the crime without accomplices. No gig appears, but the fact that Tigg travelled to the scene in one may be significant.

The connection is also suggested in the description of the locality : " Wild flowers bloomed about him, the thatched roofs of poor men's homes were in the distance, and an old grey spire, surmounted by a cross, rose up between him and the coming night." Dickens goes on to depict the rustic loneliness, the eerie solitude, the peaceful setting

* See *Miscellaneous Papers.*

soon to be disturbed by murder. The scenery, resembling that of Hertfordshire, although the actual spot was close to Salisbury: the "pleasant track . . . through some fields" might be Gill's Hill Lane. A further point of resemblance is that the crime was committed at sundown.

This, however, was not Jonas Chuzzlewit's only atrocity. He was also an intending poisoner. The dramatic episode of the finding of the poison by old Chuzzlewit and his superannuated clerk Chuffey recalls a real incident in criminal history.

When John Gilmour, a Renfrewshire farmer, died of arsenical poisoning in 1842, his young widow, Christina Gilmour, was tried for his murder. She was accused of obtaining poison, ostensibly to kill rats, and of administering it to her husband. A stable hand, John Muir, testified that he had found one of the packets of poison and had showed it to Christina's maid. Apparently the pair did not see its significance till later, or possibly they did not realise what it was. She was released on a verdict of *Not Proven*, but the facts remain open to suspicion, as anyone who cares to look up the century-old case will see.

There is a marked similarity between this piece of evidence and Chuffey's dramatic disclosure of the finding of the poisoned cough mixture.

Some of the murders recounted by Dickens have of course no factual parallel, or their origins have not been traced.

What of the terrible end of Nancy? Did Dickens invent it entirely, or was it based on some sordid crime such as that of Harris, the prizefighter, who did murder at Hackney, in 1824, and was found hiding in a tavern called the "Black Hell," in Ewer Street, Commercial Road?

It is unnecessary to decide as Dickens's creations can well stand on their own merit, whatever their first inspirations. The interest lies in maintaining a reasonable awareness about these origins.

II

It may be worth while to take an objective view of the matter, and to examine Dickens's whole attitude to capital crime.

Of the effectiveness of the murder scenes in his books there can be no dispute. Removed from the world of melodrama by the author's great descriptive powers and his psychological subtlety, they have yet the lurid vigour that is the chief asset of melodrama.

Dickens excels in this owing to his liking for strong effects, and —still more—to his temperament. With Dickens there was no neutrality. He felt strongly, and his works are pervaded with strong feeling. His expressions, to quote an instance from his own *Sketches of Young Gentlemen*, are "all superlatives."

> "Everything is of the grandest, greatest, noblest, mightiest, loftiest or the lowest, meanest, obscurest, vilest, and most pitiful. He knows no medium, for enthusiasm is the soul of poetry."

Some readers may question that this should be applied to Dickens, but it is certain that he loathed mediocrity, and was never easy on the path of compromise. He was a writer with strong feelings and strong opinions, and these qualities were never so apparent as when he was delineating crime.

Let us consider the murder of Reuben Haredale, brought to our notice so dramatically in the first chapter of *Barnaby Rudge*. Dickens envisaged the scene so clearly that the description of it stands out roundly before us—the old inn parlour, where the landlord stolidly

draws at his pipe while his cronies—not to mention the mysterious traveller—listen intently to the tale of the uneasy parish clerk. The whole scene might be a tense stage melodrama. The crime that—unbeknown to them—had just taken place is the whole drama. *Barnaby Rudge* is the story of a crime, to which the vivid representation of the Gordon riots is but a wild and terrible background. What is more, the murderer is but a cipher. The story revolves round the *effect* of his crime; not on himself, but on the strange, disordered being who gives his name to the tale.

It would be interesting to know where Dickens got his idea for this unusual study of arrested development.

III

The sudden and startling death of Tulkinghorn, at the hands of Lady Dedlock's French maid, Hortense, changes the already overcast atmosphere of *Bleak House* into nightmarish darkness. Trooper George, Lady Dedlock herself, all are suspected, before Dickens deftly switches suspicion back to the right quarter. Here, if we have little sympathy for the criminal, most of us have none for the victim. Some men one cannot regret.

Bulmer-Lytton—who, with Harrison Ainsworth formed a stylistic link between the old Gothic novel and the Dickens novel—seems to have had some influence on Dickens.

It may be the fashion in some quarters to deride Lytton as an amateur or poseur, whose writings "never transcended his wife's stays, Scott's romantic scenery, and Mrs. Radcliffe's moonlight." But there is more subtlety in Lytton than many give him credit for. His "Eugene Aram" is largely a psychological study and deals also with the influence of dreams.

Wilkie Collins also influenced Dickens but probably not to the same extent. Collins seems more of a realist than a mystic. In any case his influence on Dickens was only manifest towards the end of the latter's career. It is unlikely that Collins affected Dickens's passion for criminal psychology, for though the criminology may have come from without the psychology evidently came from within.

Dickens had an almost morbid interest in crime and was attracted by America's classic murder—the Webster-Parkman affair. The scene was Harvard, and the protagonists were two professors of medicine there.

The crime occurred in 1849 and on his second visit to America in 1868 Dickens, who had met Professor Webster in 1842, spent some time inspecting the anatomical theatre where the murder was committed, besides interrogating Longfellow and others close to the persons of the drama. The fact that Dickens had met Webster does not entirely account for his interest. The attraction of crime—an attraction of repulsion, maybe—was ever strong in the great novelist's mind.

Sometimes one feels that in his sight the emotional or detective aspect predominated. In his Detective Anecdote concerning the murder of Eliza Grimwood in a house in Waterloo Road, he follows closely the efforts of Inspector Wield to trace the murderer, yet the civil aspect of the matter apparently affected him little, as he does not inform us whether his assistance had any result.

However, he well understood the impact of murder on minds that were unbalanced, vicious, or addled with conceit. He stresses this point in his article on Capital Punishment, where he maintains that the awesome dramatic spectacle of a hanging has prompted many a misguided person to violence, urging him by its insidious promise of notoriety, even at the price of the gallows.

Dickens knew crime feeds upon itself, exercising a dangerous fascination on minds that are stunted or unstable. Significantly,

towards the end of his article, Dickens refers to Robespierre. This may serve as a link with *A Tale of Two Cities*.

In this work—not counting the dramatic end of the unlamented Marquis—there are many murders committed in the name of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and Dickens's burning descriptions leave us in no doubt as to his loathing of such wholesale and senseless slaughter.

"There are degrees in murder," he wrote in his paper on *The Begging Letter Writer*, and Dickens appears to have realised that—bad as murder was—the impulse behind it should be taken into account; the view, in fact, of an eminently sane man who could see into the very heart of human motives.

NIGHTCAPS

By FRANK J. STAFF

TO the person unfamiliar with early Victorian ways and manners a nightcap suggests whisky and water, hot, with sugar, and lemon a slice. Much could be written of the various mixtures of rum, gin and brandy, and grated nutmeg, until we arrive at wassail. A delicious subject. But *my* first recollection of a nightcap was seeing one on the head of Grandfather Martin. A conical white cap surmounted by a tassel. The one worn by my Grandmother was more elaborate, and had bows, pleats and strings for tying. Men no longer wear them. Ladies do in a number of instances and they are called "slumber nets." Worn over the left eye, unwittingly I believe, when receiving the early morning cup of tea. All this by the way. It takes me a great while to come to the point but I certainly have something of Dickensian interest to write about nightcaps.

In a recent article I referred to the attic in the house of my grandparents, and mentioned the contents. I omitted one item, however, a large ragbag, full of interesting bits and pieces, and which I was forbidden to touch. Grandmother's housemaid would say: "Master Frank, just you leave that ragbag alone—or else—" She little thought how those few words would stand me in good stead in later years; for when letters arrive beginning "Dear Sir, Unless—" I merely smile reminiscently.

In that fascinating bag of oddments was a nightcap adorned with a big tassel, so by spreading out the fragments of discarded dresses, assorted rags, all highly coloured, a green velvet waistcoat with glass buttons, seating myself in the centre, with nightcap on head, I became the sole owner of a bazaar in Bagdad and my name—Abou Hassan. And what would a child know of Eastern bazaars? One of the books in the attic was a copy of "The Arabian Nights Entertainments," a battered and much-soiled copy, and a schoolboy scrawl proclaimed it as once the property of Robert J. Martin (Uncle Bob). Therefore, when in the books of Dickens, I encountered "nightcaps, various," can you wonder at my great interest in this old-fashioned article of dress?

Even young men wore them in those days, and an illustration portrays Richard Swiveller with nightcap on head, playing the flute. Scrooge wore one, Mrs. Raddle, too; the fascinating Miggs wore one; Mrs. Squeers serves brimstone and treacle with period nightcap on head. Miss Witherfield wore one and it must be presumed that it was deemed immodest to permit a man, not one's husband, to realise the fact, as the nightcap was hurriedly removed when Mr. Pickwick remarked upon it at the Great White Horse Hotel, Ipswich. Mr.

Pickwick's nightcap is, of course, historical, and his anger can be imagined when it was snatched from his head by Mivins in the Fleet and planted on the head of the maudlin singer.

And now to strike a somewhat sombre note, occasioned by my reference to the single Lady in the Great White Horse Hotel. The greater portion of the *Pickwick Papers* is lighthearted and innocent fun ; the literature of the present day is not so innocent. It is often sinister. In my youthful days I was forbidden to buy what was termed a " penny dreadful." One such book, my most prized in those thoughtless times, was entitled " Bloodstained Bill the Terror of Walworth." To-day a book very similar with regard to the contents may be purchased for seven and sixpence with the possible title of " Percy, the Playboy of Putney." I fear the age is bolder and ruder ; no longer are the bashful maidens of fifteen taught to say " Papa, potatoes, prunes and prism " before entering a room, in order to secure a demure and tiny mouth ; no, they paint their lips with red lipstick in order to make them larger in appearance. Why ? ; do not ask me, for I am a child in such matters. Furthermore, a number of our young ladies delight in slang words. I recall a dear old white-haired lady saying to her granddaughter, " My darling, your language at times worries me, and I wish you would refrain from using two objectionable words ; they are—lousy and putrid." And the modern young lady replied " Yes, Granny dear, what are the two words ? " But to return to my point, and, accept apologies for wandering ; were those single ladies of early Victorian days, so timid and fragile ? Miss Witherfield is staying at a large hotel and occupies a double-bedded room. The hour is late when she retires to her virtuous couch. She is without a chaperon. She is eventually confronted by Mr. Pickwick who entered that bedroom, fully dressed ; remember that, fully dressed. Mr. Pickwick, a worthy counterpart to Caesar's wife. Now, for the entrance on the scene of the villain of the piece, the serpent on the watch, who hurls a stone into the silent pool to cause endless ripples ; the wielder of the poison pen that casts a gloom over a hitherto peaceful village dominated by an ancient church, and picturesque " local," opposite a duck pond.

The train is laid, the mine is preparing. And who is the villain about to sully the reputation of a middle-aged lady of the Victorian era ? I'll tell you. It is the guileless, blue-eyed writer of this article.

Mr. Pickwick had apparently left his own bedchamber, when in search of his watch, fully dressed, leaving his night attire to await his return. On securing his watch he erroneously enters a room not his own, and on the bed or chair is a man's nightcap ; after events prove that fact.

We must assume that the owner of that nightcap was expected, and had arranged to stay the night. He certainly did not expect to see Mr. Pickwick enter the room. Had he been as innocent a personage as that gentleman, he would have confronted him with " This is my room, Sir, kindly get out." But no, he apparently scrambles under the bed leaving behind his nightcap. Now, who is this Casanova, this wrecker of homes ? It was not old Peter Magnus, I'll wager on that. " Here's mysteries ; Oh gracious, here's mysteries." Ah, Miggs my dear, why were you not in the *Pickwick Papers* ? Your sharp-pointed red nose would soon have smelt out the answer."

As I have by this time made myself perfectly objectionable, I will conclude by paraphrasing the lines of an early English poet :

" Mr. Pickwick wore another person's nightcap.
Did Mr. Pickwick wear another person's nightcap ?
If Mr. Pickwick wore another person's nightcap ;
Who was the person, whose nightcap Mr. Pickwick wore ? "

DOCTORS IN DICKENS

By EDWARD RAYMOND EASTON, M.D.

I

CHARLES DICKENS was one of the first English novelists to bring into the light of day the joys and sorrows of the submerged millions in the lower and the lower-middle classes. The novelists of his day concerned themselves chiefly with the delicate emotions of lords and ladies, dukes and duchesses, or at the very least, of the so-called "gentry."

But the clear insight of Dickens penetrated the hovel, the workhouse, the prison, and the sickroom of the poor and found endless inspiration in these treasure-houses of human nature. He showed that ordinary people can be as interesting, romantic, and heroic as any who are born to the purple; that "kind hearts are more than coronets, and simple faith than Norman blood." He found there also unspeakable want, squalor, and suffering, which stirred to overflowing the deep springs of his benevolent nature.

It is evident from reading his works that Dickens's "one increasing purpose" was to bring about social reforms by exposing the evils of his time. As he himself declared in the preface to *The Pickwick Papers*,* "I shall cherish the hope that every volume of this Edition will afford me an opportunity of exterminating some wrong or abuse set forth in it. . . . Who knows but by the time this series reaches its conclusion it may be discovered that . . . the universal diffusion of common means of decency and health is as much the right of the poorest of the poor as it is indispensable to the safety of the rich, and of the State."

And surely it is not without significance that the middle decades of the nineteenth century, in which his works were being published, witnessed sweeping advances in the field of medicine. How much his writings had to do with this, we cannot know, but there is no doubt that he awakened the public conscience to the need for cleanliness, decency, and humanity towards the sick, and gave impetus to the public health movement that began in Britain about that time.

In those days injustice, cruelty, and disease were accepted as normal conditions of life. Epidemics spread unchecked, and human beings had at all times but a frail hold on existence. The medical doctors' knowledge of anatomy or physiology had advanced but little from much earlier times. Physics and chemistry had not yet been brought to the aid of research. Healing consisted chiefly of bleeding the patient by means of leeches or by opening a vein, with the use of a limited number of drugs, and the rigorous exclusion of fresh air from the sickroom. The concept of preventive medicine had not yet come into being.

It was not until the decade 1860 to 1870 that the bacterial cause of infection was discovered through the genius of Louis Pasteur, and Joseph Lister established the principle of antisepsis, soon to be followed by asepsis. Long before this time, in the early 1840's, Oliver Wendell Holmes had suggested that puerperal fever was probably carried from patient to patient by the unclean hands of the physician, and a few years later Semmelweis in Vienna showed empirically that this was true. The contribution of Holmes met with hostility, and that of Semmelweis with derision. Maternal deaths from puerperal fever continued with appalling frequency, and it was not until twenty years later that Koch and Pasteur were able to convince the world that the disease was actually transmitted thus.

* The Cheap Edition, 1847.

Ether anæsthesia was unknown previous to 1842, and many years elapsed before it came into general use. At the time of Dickens's earlier works, opium and alcohol were the only means of deadening pain in surgical operations.

Medical nursing was in like case. Up to the time this profession was organised and ennobled by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War of 1854, hospitals were often in a lamentable condition and nursing was considered a degrading occupation, fit only for inferior beings. The immortal Sairey Gamp is typical of the ignorant, dissolute, and often dishonest, women to whom the care of the sick was then entrusted.

II

It was upon such a background that Dickens drew his inimitable caricatures, which remain, as G. K. Chesterton said, "like things carved in stone," and yet are so living that they have enriched the generations with wholesome mirth.

These men and women are entirely human: they strive to cover up their ignorance, faults, and inadequacies with hypocrisy, bumptiousness, and snobbery, in accordance with the most modern psychological formulas. Such traits are deeply rooted in human nature, and exist in many persons to-day, but owing to our better education and training, higher standards, and stronger social organisation, they no longer have such free play.

Of course, like all caricaturists, Dickens exaggerated certain features in order to drive home a truth; and, underneath all the froth of his ludicrous creations, runs his grave and unremitting passion for human betterment. To this end, he in turn shakes our sides with delighted laughter, tears our hearts with compassion, and fires our minds with generous indignation. What art could have a finer motive; what artist employ more telling strokes?

An example of his method is shown in the Proceedings of the Section on Anatomy and Medicine of the Mudfog Association for the Advancement of Everything, in which he takes a fling at some medical fads and follies of the day. These were the use of bleeding as a panacea for all disorders, the practice of homeopathy, and the attempt to cure illness by mesmerism or "animal magnetism."

Thus, Dr. Kutankumagen (of Moscow) is made to describe the successful treatment of a stout, red-cheeked man with a loud voice, hearty laugh, good appetite, and full round pulse. The patient was relieved of these "complaints" by means of powerful physics, low diet, and bleeding, so that within a month he was well enough to be carried downstairs by two nurses. Finally he became able to walk a little, assisted by a boy and a crutch. He ate little, slept little and ceased to laugh.

Dr. W. R. Fee complimented Dr. Kutankumagen on the cure and inquired respectfully whether the patient was bled *freely* during the whole course of treatment. The surgeon assured him that the bleeding was copious at all times, and Dr. Neeshawts suggested that, but for this, such an extraordinary cure could not have been made.

Following this, Professor Muff, in the Mudfog Association, Exponent of Homeopathy, illustrated the principle that the minutest amount of any drug properly dispersed through the human frame would produce the same result as a very large dose given in the usual manner. He cited the case of a patient suffering from a broken head, who was cured by this system in the short space of three months. A member inquired whether, on the same principle, the twentieth part of a grain of bread and cheese would sustain the lives of paupers. Professor Muff was willing to stake his professional reputation that it would

adequately support human life in workhouses, and that the addition of one fifteenth of a grain of pudding twice a week would render it a high diet.

Mr. Pipkin, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, related the case of a gentleman who, being in fear of drowning, instructed his servant in such an event to place a drop of water on his tongue, feeling assured that this would restore him to life. Unfortunately, this gentleman was shot instead of drowned, and Mr. Pipkin regretted that the servant was too stupid to administer the infinitesimal dose of lead and gunpowder that would have saved his life. *Similia similibus curantur* !

At a meeting presided over by Dr. Soemup assisted by Messrs. Pessel and Mortair, Dr. Grummidge (evidently a psychiatrist) described his treatment of a lady suffering from monomania. This lady had seen another lady wearing a beautiful pearl necklace, and her husband being unable to afford a similar one for her, the patient fell ill. Her symptoms consisted of sullenness, neglect of domestic duties, and general apathy. When pearls were mentioned, however, she burst into passionate tears and cried out that nobody cared for her and she wished she was dead. Dr. Grummidge put the lady on a diet of weak gruel, took twenty ounces of blood, applied a blister under each ear and on the chest and back, gave her five grains of calomel, and finally shaved all the curls from her head. In a very short time the patient was entirely cured and showed no further interest in pearls or ornaments of any kind.

An extraordinary case of the power of animal magnetism was reported by Professor Nogo. The subject was a night watchman who suffered from insomnia while at work. On merely being looked at from across the street by a practitioner, the man fell into a drowsy state, and when lightly rubbed on his palms went into a sound sleep lasting for ten hours. The professor did not say *what* was rubbed on the palms, or whether anything was missing from the premises the next day.

Another case, which seems to illustrate nothing but crass ignorance and wild flights of imagination, was described by Dr. Knight Bell (M.R.C.S.). His patient was a gentleman who had swallowed a door key in his early youth, and the good doctor exhibited a wax impression of the gentleman's interior to prove the case. He also told how a dissipated young medical student, who was present at the post-mortem examination, had stolen the part of the stomach containing the imprint of the key, had a new key made from it, and by this means entered and looted the deceased gentleman's house.

Dr. Toorell inquired what had become of the original key, to which Dr. Knight Bell replied that the gentleman had been much addicted to drinking punch and the acid from this had probably devoured the key.

III

From these broad satires on medical customs in the Mudfog Association, we pass to a few vignettes of physicians and surgeons whom Dickens has made memorable chiefly for their personal idiosyncrasies.

Dr. Slammer, that redoubtable surgeon of the 79th Regiment, will be fondly remembered as the pugnacious little doctor in *Pickwick*, who is discovered paying court to a rich old widow at a ball at the Bull Inn. He becomes madly jealous when his lady-love dances with Mr. Jingle who is arrayed for the occasion in a very peculiar coat belonging to Mr. Winkle. Dr. Slammer rushes up to Mr. Jingle and offers his card, but Mr. Jingle has no card to give him in return and is also intoxicated, so the matter has to be postponed.

The next morning Mr. Winkle, in his own coat, is called out by Dr. Slammer's second, and decides to accept the challenge even though he has no idea what it is all about. Solemn arrangements are made for the duel, but when Dr. Slammer beholds the face of his antagonist twenty paces away, he realises that this is not the villain who "insulted" him the night before and refuses to fire.

The attending surgeon, however—Dr. Payne of the 43rd—who is spoiling for a fight and not at all averse to other people's danger—urges him to go on with the duel regardless. Dr. Payne is finally suppressed and all parties repair amicably to the inn in order to restore their nerves with brandy and water in company with the other Pickwickians.

It is also in *The Pickwick Papers* that we find the high-spirited and impecunious Bob Sawyer and his faithful satellite, Ben Allen, students of medicine. Both these youths are steady tipplers and it is only after Bob Sawyer receives his M.D. and takes the unlucrative practice of Dr. Nockemorf, that he exhibits his peculiar genius. His offices, consisting of a drug-shop and a surgery, are well equipped with gilt-labelled drawers and bottles, but Bob explains that "half the drawers have nothing in 'em and the other half don't open." In fact, the only genuine stock he has consists of some leeches and "even these are second-hand."

Over their hot punches and brandies, Bob and Ben concoct ways and means to stimulate business. One scheme is to send a boy in a smart uniform to deliver medicine to the wrong houses, where all the puzzled inmates will read the legend on the package—"From Sawyer's, late Nockemorf's. Physicians' prescriptions carefully prepared." The next day the boy returns for the package, explaining the blunder—'Very sorry—his mistake—immense business great many parcels to deliver—Mr. Sawyer's compliments late Nockemorf." One small bottle had gone thus on its advertising rounds to half the houses in Bristol.

In the end the two worthy medicoes are made happy, solvent, and partly sober, by receiving surgical appointments from the famous East India Company.

It is through another medical student, also in *The Pickwick Papers*, Mr. Jack Hopkins, a teller of tall stories, that we learn of the amazing skill of Mr. Slasher, surgeon at St. Bartholomew's. It appears that that this great man took a child's leg out of the socket so cleverly that the child immediately ate five apples and a ginger cake and asked him when he was going to begin.

Mr. Hopkins had been detained at Bart's on account of a casualty or, as he stated, "rather a good accident brought into the casualty ward."

"What was that, sir?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Only a man fallen out of a four pair of stair window—but it's a very fair case—very fair case indeed."

"Do you mean that the patient is in a fair way to recover?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"No," replied Mr. Hopkins carelessly. "No, I should rather say he wouldn't. There must be a splendid operation though, tomorrow—magnificent sight if Slasher does it."

Also, there was a marvellous case of the child who swallowed the beads of his sister's necklace and rattled continuously. "For he's in the hospital now," said Jack Hopkins, "and he makes such a devil of a noise when he walks about, that they're obliged to muffle him in a watchman's coat, for fear he should wake up the other patients."

"That's the most extraordinary case I heard of," said Mr. Pickwick, with an emphatic blow on the table.

"Oh, that's nothing," said Jack Hopkins. "Is it, Bob?"

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"Very singular things occur in our profession, I can assure you, sir," said Mr. Hopkins.

"So I should be disposed to imagine," said Mr. Pickwick.

So you see, even in Dickens's day, the most startling things occurred of an accidental nature which certainly mystified Mr. Pickwick and stirred his imagination. Whether he would be startled by our present-day newspaper reports after listening to the tall stories of Jack Hopkins is very much in question.

Dr. Jobling, the Medical Officer of the fraudulent Anglo-Bengalese Disinterested Loan and Life Assurance Company, in *Martin Chuzlzewit*, was a suave rascal who enjoyed great popularity and a big practice. Knowing full well that the Anglo-Bengalese Company was a swindle, the doctor protected his reputation by disclaiming all knowledge of its business, explaining that he was only a paid employé, and that delicacy—such a valuable trait in a medical man—forbade him to show any curiosity about the Company's financial affairs.

After establishing this alibi, the good doctor would proceed to rope in his patients as clients for the company, certifying the sick and the well with perfect impartiality, and receiving a substantial commission on each of his victims.

IV

In Mr. Lumbey, who attends Mrs. Kenwigs in her sixth confinement, we find a kindly, tactful gentleman, who is sadly overworked, since "he was *popular* and the neighbourhood *prolific*." The Key to his popularity is not far to seek. As the nascent Kenwigs emerges into the world, the doctor pronounces him the finest boy he ever saw in all his life. Here Dickens observes the curious fact that every baby born in the world is a finer one than the last, which he believes to be a complete answer to those who think the human species is degenerating. Perhaps it is with this thought in mind that Dr. Lumbey is no advocate of birth control. He assures the rather dubious Mr. Kenwigs that six children are not half enough and that he will have a fine family in the course of time.

The snobbish fashionable physician is well pictured in the form of Dr. Parker Peps, who is consulted after the birth of little Paul Dombey. Dr. Peps is puffed up with his own importance and likes to appear so accustomed to attending the nobility that he keeps referring to Mrs. Dombey as Her Grace the Duchess, Lady So-and-So, or the Countess Dombey, and then apologises for his very natural mistake.

Mr. Pilkins, the family doctor, is bursting with pride at being in such distinguished company and follows Dr. Parker Peps about with obsequious attentions and flatteries, which the great man condescendingly accepts. Dr. Peps afterwards received a knighthood.

In Mr. Bayham Badger, in *Bleak House*, we find a meek little doctor "with a fresh pink complexion, a weak voice, white teeth, light hair, and surprised eyes." He is remarkable for nothing except his intense admiration for Mrs. Bayham Badger and her two preceding husbands.

Dr. Chillip, in *David Copperfield*, is another example of extreme modesty. He was the meekest and mildest of little men—a veritable nineteenth-century Caspar Milquetoast. He sidled softly in and out of a room with his head on one side as if in mute apology for presuming to be alive. "He couldn't have *thrown* a word to a mad dog," says his creator; "he might have offered one gently, or half a one, or a fragment of one," but he wouldn't have been rude to the dog for anything.

It was such a defenceless creature as this who came into the awful presence of Miss Betsey Trotwood while she awaited, with cotton in her ears, the birth of David Copperfield. When the terrified little doctor announced that the child was a boy instead of a girl, Miss Betsey abused him roundly and struck him with her bonnet so hard as to bend it.

This experience remained with Mr. Chillip, in all its pristine horror, into his old age, when he told the grown-up David how it had "unmanned him." We can't help feeling, however, that Mr. Chillip's choice of words was unfortunate, since the process of unmanning implies a man to start with.

Nevertheless, Mr. Chillip was a lovable character, kind and gentle as a woman to David at the death of his unfortunate mother, and it makes one happy to know that the little doctor prospered and enjoyed a comfortable old age. He was the sort of man who all too often gets trodden underfoot.

With the character of the able and prosperous Dr. Joe Specks, in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, there seems to be little fault to find. Certainly no charge of overmodesty can be brought against him, for his office was bestrewn with testimonials like the following: "Portrait of Mr. Specks," "Bust of Mr. Specks," "Silver cup from grateful patients to Mr. Specks," "Presentation from local clergyman," "Dedication from local Poet," "Dinner card from local nobleman," "Tract inscribed *Hommage de l'auteur á Specks*." Such minor foibles many of us have seen with our own eyes in this our day and time!

Dr. Wosky was the type of medical man who makes a fortune by humouring wealthy hypochondriacs. (Heaven forbid that such should be known to-day!) He appears in the story of a boarding-house, in *Sketches by Boz*, where he attends the rich widow Bloss. This lady was a former cook, who had married her employer. Being coarse, vulgar, and uneducated, and having nothing to do, she took refuge in fancied illnesses, which Dr. Wosky assiduously encouraged. For this well-fed patient, he prescribed plenty of nourishment, plenty of stimulants, and no giving way to her "sensibilities."

Accordingly, the lady took quantities of stout and one mutton chop in bed and another at ten o'clock to prepare her stomach for the regular meals of the day. Now, we all know the impressive dimensions of a real English mutton chop as compared with the trumpery things in paper ruffles that come to modern tables, so we can guess that Dr. Wosky soon had a real patient on his hands in the person of Mrs. Bloss.

Returning to the pages of *Nicholas Nickleby*, we find another exampe of fashionable physician, Sir Tumley Snuffin, who has made a complete invalid of Mrs. Wititterly by his delicate handling of her case.

In quite another vein is the tragic story, in *A Tale of Two Citlie*, of Alexandre Manette, the high-minded Paris physician called to attend a peasant boy and girl who had been done to death by two vicious aristocrats. We remember how when driven by his conscience to report these atrocities, the doctor was flung into the Bastille without a pretence of a trial, and languished there for half a lifetime. We remember how his mind gave way, and when finally released he needed long and loving care for the recovery of his health.

Another sad medical story from Dickens appears in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. It describes the downfall of Dr. Lewsome, a young assistant to a general practitioner in the city of London. This unfortunate young man formed the habit of heavy drinking and gambling, through which he fell in with the murderous Jonas Chuzzlewit. In order to discharge a gambling debt to Jonas, the doctor consented to give him some poisonous drugs, ostensibly to kill cats. Both men were fully aware, however, that Jonas wanted them for the purpose of poisoning

his old father. Under the lash of conscience, the young doctor became ill with fever and unconsciously revealed the terrible secret.

In sharp contrast to all these frail and faulty human creatures, Dickens gives us the character of Allan Woodcourt, in *Bleak House*. Allan is no doubt the author's ideal of what a physician should be ; earnest, sincere, skilful, kind and gentle ; altruistic, always ready to serve the poor and the suffering ; heroic in times of disaster ; and in his personal life a loyal friend and faithful lover. Indeed, this young doctor had all the virtues, and yet somehow we do not dislike him. Perhaps it is because he is the kind of man we would all, in our secret hearts, like to be ; and some of us may even *strive* to be.

This brief and incomplete survey of the medical world of Dickens's time brings into high relief the vast changes that have taken place since then. We shudder to think of the conditions under which sick people used to suffer, with death always looming nearer at hand. It makes us glad to be living in the present era. Imperfect though it may be, ours is a cleaner, healthier, happier, more humane and more enlightened age, and for this we may well lift our hearts in gratitude to Charles Dickens, the great-souled genius who helped to make it so.

FROM RECENT BOOKS

By LOUIS B. FREWER, M.A.
(Bodleian Library)

DICKENS AND THE CHURCH

The Pickwick Papers appeared in 1836. According to G. M. Young (" Victorian England "), the work of the Evangelicals was done by 1830, and faith began to harden into a code. Up to about 1850, Evangelical observances strengthened their hold on the upper and middle classes, so that Dickens's first period of writing fell within a time of unchallenged Evangelical supremacy. Like most busy men, he probably relied for his prejudices on early impressions, so that we need not look for any development in his views about religion. He was born in a Church of England family but his leanings were all humanitarian, and in 1843 he attached himself for a time to a Unitarian congregation. The novels have no theological interest whatever, but they reflect popular ideas, and must in their turn have contributed largely to the reinforcement and propagation of these ideas. Intellectual difficulties seem to be non-existent. Religion, or rather religiosity is presupposed as a vague background.

Before we look at the novels, we may ask whether Dickens's idea of the Church is not as inaccurate as his idea of cricket. In the famous description of Dingley Dell *v.* All-Muggleton, we are told that Dumkins and Podder scored fifty-four, and when their wickets had fallen Dingley Dell had scored none. At an early stage in the game the latter gave in, without apparently batting at all. Dickens's caricatures of Dissenting ministers are probably no more trustworthy. But he views them entirely from the outside. He must have known something about so powerful an institution as the Church of England was then, and his testimony at least registers faithfully the popular verdict as regards things in general, though his details may be as inaccurate as his cricket lore.

David Copperfield's first impressions of Blunderstone Church have that photographic accuracy of a child's memories. The high-backed pew ; the window through which Peggotty looked to be sure the house was not on fire ; the sheep hesitating at the open door of the porch ; the monumental tablets ; the pulpit suggesting to him a boy playing " King of the Castle " and repelling another boy who comes up the stairs to attack ; the preacher's velvet cushion with tassels. Then, again, Canterbury Cathedral—" the earthy smell, and sunless air . . . the resounding of the organ through the black and white

arched galleries and aisles." *Dombey and Son* has another vivid picture, of a town church this time, attended for a christening, in which the light and air of Blunderstone have vanished. " So chill and earthy was the place. The tall shrouded pulpit and reading desk ; the dreary perspective of empty pews stretching away under the galleries, and empty benches mounting to the roof and lost in the shadows of the great grim organ ; the dusty matting and cold stone slabs ; the grisly free seats in the aisles ; and the damp corner by the bell-rope . . . " By contrast, St. Clement Danes, where Mrs. Lirriper of *Christmas Stories* worshipped, is cheerful : " where I now have a sitting in a very pleasant pew with genteel company and my own hassock, and being partial to evening service not too crowded."

In describing a country church Dickens could be farcical. Little Nell . . . reached a village in sight of the Welsh mountains. " It was a very aged, ghostly place . . . and had once a convent or monastery attached." High up in the walls of the church were " small galleries, where the nuns had been wont to glide along—dimly seen in their dark dresses so far off—or to pause like gloomy shadows, listening to the prayers." The church had a crypt, a dim and murky spot in which was a well, " dug at first (thought the sexton) to make the old place more gloomy, and the old monks more religious."

English sentiment, says G. M. Young, clung to a picture of traditional village life with piously observed Sundays, " as Roman sentiment saw in the Sabine farm the home of virtue and national greatness." This helps to account for Dickens's idealisation of the gentle white-haired country clergyman by contrast with the town parson whom he disliked. The " simple-hearted old gentleman, of a shrinking, subdued spirit," who comforted Little Nell is typical ; he ministered to a flock of " humble folks," many coming three or four miles to church. Tom Pinch, the organist of the village church in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, is a much loved figure. From Chapter XXXI we learn that the organ was in a loft, and as the organist worked the bellows with his feet it evidently had no pedals. Mr. Pecksniff played the eavesdropper on Tom and Mary, hidden in a high-curtained pew. When Tom had gone he sought the vestry, where he helped himself to port wine and biscuits and was startled by the appearance of two surplices, one black and the other white, in a cupboard. When Oliver Twist reaches the country, he is taught by the clergyman, " a white-haired old gentleman . . . who spoke so kindly." On Sunday " there was the little church . . . the sweet-smelling air stealing in at the low porch, and filling the homely building with its fragrance. The poor people were so neat and clean, and knelt so reverently in prayer." The clergyman of Dingley Dell in *Pickwick Papers* is sympathetically sketched. The whole party go to church on Christmas morning, and Bob Sawyer carves his name in letters four inches long. " The Convict's Return," the tale told in Chapter VI, refers to " the communion-table before which he had so often repeated the Commandments he had reverenced as a child, and forgotten as a man "—presumably the " Lord, have mercy . . . " of the ante-communion service is meant. In *Reprinted Pieces* (" Sunday as it might have been ") Dickens speaks with high praise of the village parson who organises cricket on Sunday evening which may be a genuine reminiscence. But the Lincolnshire village church in *Bleak House* " is mouldy ; the oaken pulpit breaks out into a cold sweat ; and there is a general smell and taste as of the ancient Dedlocks in their graves."

We must not forget Traddles's father-in-law in *David Copperfield*, the curate in Devonshire, who had ten children, mostly girls, none of whom, apparently, works for her living. Traddles visits Devonshire, walking there in eight days. The best paid curates at this period were in the diocese of Rochester, according to G. M. Young, where stipends reached £109 a year.

In contrast to the country clergy, the town, or rather suburban, curate in " Our Parish " (*Sketches by Boz*) is described as an effeminate person, fussed over by pious women. The poor people rise to bow and curtsey as the rich lady enters. *Little Dorrit* displays a real *animus* against the church. The church bell is maddening, the congregation scanty. Clennam passes the lighted " windows of a congregationless church." The only well-worked parish is Milvey's in *Our Mutual Friend*. The ways of a cathedral in the pre-restoration era are depicted in *Edwin Drood*, with Durdles the stonemason tapping the walls for traces of " old 'uns."

Were churches really empty in Dickens's London ? The bulk of the people according to him were not in the least Sabbatarian. The typical

city man sits out in the garden reading a Sunday paper. The people in summer pour out to tea gardens and crowd the river Thames (*Sketches by Boz*). Many steamers ply, loaded with excursionists. Churches, indeetd are well filled, but with fashionable folk ; the sermon lasts twelve minutes only. Provision shops are open in the middle of the day. At dusk, " the roads leading from the different places of suburban resort are crowded with people on their return home " (*Reprinted Pieces*, " Sunday as it is "). This description dates from 1836. Probably large sections of the population were as " unchurched " as they are to-day. Mr. Young thinks that more than half the population in 1851 " went somewhere." He quotes Lord Shaftesbury as saying that only two per cent. of the great underworld went anywhere. The world described by Dickens is largely underworld and certainly the church seems to play a negligible hand in its life. In 1851 again, there were said to be 70,000 communicants in the diocese of London, out of a population of 2,000,000, a slightly smaller proportion than in 1939. It is significant that the Holy Communion is not, I think, mentioned in the pages of Dickens. There is a reference to week-day services in *Bleak House*. Esther Summerson's godmother " was a good, good woman ! She went to church three times every Sunday, and to morning prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays and to lectures whenever there were lectures ; and never missed."

But the church in his novels is always there, in the background. The church clocks are always striking. Weddings in gloomy city churches abound. The only intellectual difficulty I have been able to find mentioned is the oft too optimistic phraseology of the burial service (*Our Mutual Friend*). The presuppositions of Evangelicalism are not shaken, though its sometimes unlovely manifestations are satirised. The non-churchgoers of Dickens may forget God, but they do not doubt His existence.

This sketch was written before reading Mr. H. House's " The Dickens World," which contains a chapter on religion.—" Eighteenth Century Piety," by W. K. Lowther Clarke. (S.P.C.K.)

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U.S. AND U.K.

Mr. G. F. Lamb recently edited an anthology entitled " United States and United Kingdom " (Harrap), presenting comparisons, contrasts and similarities in English and American life and literature. His selections have been carefully chosen and cleverly applied. In the section on " Scenes and Portraits," he places in juxtaposition Dickens's " An English Boy helps a Convict " (*Great Expectations*) and Mark Twain's " An American Boy helps a Negro " (" The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn ") as illustrative of the " human boy." As indicative of the provincial presses of the respective countries, he compares " Journalism in Eatanswill " (*Pickwick*) with Mark Twain's " Journalism in Tennessee " (" Editorial Wild Oats "). And finally, when the Englishman looks at America, we find as Dickens's contribution his description of a canal-boat journey, taken from *American Notes*.

L. B. F.

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THE CHARLES DICKENS LIBRARY

" Harassed as I was editorially with the production of World's Great Books . . . I still contrived to get on with several other undertakings, among these a new edition of Dickens, to each volume of which I contributed bibliographical and critical introductions, and for which I also compiled a book of Dickensiana called ' The Dickens Companion,' and another volume devoted entirely to the illustrators of Dickens. The distinguishing feature of this edition, known as The Charles Dickens Library, and frequently reprinted, was a set of 500 brilliant new plates by Harry Furniss. How the brisk little man worked to produce these ! Although he had stipulated for a year in which to make his 500 drawings, he did the lot in barely ten months . . . Furniss received something like £2,500 for these drawings."—" Books and Myself," by J. A. Hammerton. (MacDonald.)

A SMALL STAR IN THE EAST

(In the Second World War)

IN the past year Headquarters has again received kind and most generous gifts from Overseas Branches for distribution among sufferers, mostly children, from bombing and war conditions.

I imagined those who have taken immense pains to organise the collection of money and gifts and those who give, turning their eyes towards the East and thinking of the British Isles, to them a little sturdy rock facing the Nazi-ridden continent of Europe. Their pity for the children was stirred and shone like a great Star above this tiny rock, providing yet another link with the great writer who lived upon it and toiled so valiantly for the children of *his* day. And I think how much those people would like to see where their gifts go and exactly how they meet the needs.

These generous friends may be very sure that care is taken to select those best suited to distribute what is sent. One, for instance, is Councillor Mrs. Newcombe, living in the very neighbourhood in which Charles Dickens spent the unhappy part of his boyhood. Once she organised a Christmas party, one of those a child never forgets, and with her help this winter many women and children in the St. Pancras area received parcels of the good clothing sent to us from overseas. Miss Doris Minards, in the country and despite a heavy war job, gives thought and care out of great experience in helping what I would call the "hidden" poor, by the distribution of such clothing. Clothes have been as welcome as money—in a way more so—being severely rationed and often too dear for the war-burdened mother.

Then there is an Army man, who takes what leisure his exacting job allows to write as often as possible to about forty evacuated children besides sending them birthday and Christmas gifts and, when in London and off duty, tramps about London's East End bringing gifts and comfort into wrecked though often pathetically plucky homes. The Misses Warren, of Harrow, have done great work of a similar kind and with the utmost sympathy. The Hon. Secretaries of British Branches have also freely given willing help in the distribution of these generously-provided funds and gifts in kind.

How can we in England send you a picture of the cases met with, of the pleasure, the surprise, the comfort given? It would be a long story, for it has gone on a long while, since first the bombs began their deadly work over here. Some stand out, of course. Apart from the party I mentioned, which must have been like an afternoon in Heaven to children who have seen so little jollity, and clothes which were so badly needed, in poverty or after a "blitz," there are other needs accentuated by war of which one little thinks.

There is the mother of seven children, six of whom were evacuated early in the war, whose father died three years ago leaving only one boy old enough to help support them, who himself has since been killed on active service. The mother is often ill and her means so slender that to send these evacuated children a few necessities—the Government only providing bare maintenance—she could only very rarely afford the fare to go and see them. Even then, the children being billeted in different houses, she could only manage to see them all by collecting them at a tea shop—part of the "treat." Help has been provided from our Overseas Funds to enable this mother to go more often and to provide a little more for the children.

There is the case of a baby coming into the world last Christmas without even a blanket which could be spared from the five other children to cover it, so a little pair of blankets was hurried along just in time.

Then there is the sad case of a child whose mother is in a mental home, deserted by her father, and bombed while in the care of an aunt. With a few salvaged possessions they were living in one basement room when found by the Army man. Despite all, this child had managed to win a Scholarship, but could not use it since they were bombed because there was no money either for clothes or for small extras required. The Children's Care Committee obtained a small additional grant of £6 per annum, but as this was not enough the case was brought to the notice of the Army man, who was able to save the situation out of our Overseas Funds temporarily, and further help has been promised. Would you like a peep into a basement window down in London's devastated East End, which with all an old lady's hardships, will wink at you with a bright little fire from the grate ? Would you like to see a pretty child's head bent over its homework and to know that your gift has helped to provide her with the means of using her Scholarship ?

I could tell you endless such stories and you can visualise more : the frightened child in an air raid shelter comforted by comforting the doll sent by you ; the little boy whose boat or engine makes him think of travelling over to you ; the lonely evacuated child to whom a good picture book means escape from monotony or the memory of a dreadful night of bombing.

Be very sure, these children understand a great deal. Many of them now know of Charles Dickens and that he wrote about children ; they know how your gifts have reached them, that your men came to fight the Germans and much about your country.

Do you not think this will make a link as they grow up ? Do you not think the Star has led you aright ?

Be very sure it has. Be very sure these children will not forget and that many a weary mother blesses you. G. M.

Since we published the last list of funds received for the benefit of British children, we have gratefully to acknowledge the following :

	£	s.	d.
Vancouver Branch	100	0	0
The Toronto Branch and Boz Club	85	0	0
Winnipeg Branch	16	15	7

Hon. Secretary.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Drawn by] [*Ruth Whittaker*

LITERARY LONDON

I am preparing for publication after the War, a volume to be entitled "London for the Literary." There are to be chapters on the four literary shrines. My old friend, Miss Jolly, has kindly provided some interesting and amusing reminiscences of her experience as guide to the Dickens House. I am sure other readers can match them. I should be glad to hear from any of the latter and, of course, will make due acknowledgment.

71 Union Road, Clapham, S.W.4. W. KENT.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

THE BATH BRANCH

A HIGHLY successful season is drawing to its conclusion. Despite deaths and removals the membership has been well maintained, the attendances have been good and, under the genial and tactful presidency of Miss Grace Caple, the meetings have been singularly happy.

The reading and study of *Bleak House* was the principal work of the session, but varied by several deeply interesting papers.

Mrs. F. J. Giddings, who possesses a cyclopedic knowledge of everything Dickensian gave a talk on " Dickens Courtships." Mr. F. C. Dance read a paper on " Dickens and some of his Contemporary Novelists," and our Life President, Alderman T. Sturge Cotterell, took for his subject, " Some of Dickens's Bachelors," an intriguing theme which was followed by a lively and humorous discussion.

During the session we have lost by death several of our older members, among them Miss Florence Tylee, a past President and one of our most honoured and respected members, a veteran whose memory carried her back to the days when Dickens was still a living power in the land, having distinct recollection of his last visit to this city. She had considerable literary gifts and was an occasional contributor to *The Dickensian*. Miss Turbaville Williams was another veteran member who has gone from us, an excellent reader and a lively participant in all our activities.

On March 19th we repeated our last year's experiment and again had a highly successful "Dickensian Brains Trust," which was again arranged by Mr. F. J. Giddings who, as heretofore, acted as Question Master.

F. C. D.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

THE past season has been a highly successful one and meetings have maintained an excellent standard. These have included a lantern lecture on " Dickens and the Stage " by Mr. Birkby, a merry Christmas party, a well-attended Birthday Luncheon, with Mr. Frank S. Johnson, of London, as chief guest, and a dramatic adaptation of " David Copperfield's Childhood " arranged by Mrs. Armstrong Wilson.

Inter-Branch visits have also been a noteworthy feature of the season. At the Annual General Meeting the retiring President, the Rev. Charles Burke, who has so ably held this office for the past three years, invested the new President, Miss Mary Corney.

M. L-A.

BALHAM BRANCH

IT is gratifying to state that at the first meeting of the season last November this Branch was once more placed on a pre-war basis. Mr. Fullwood was unanimously re-elected President for the sixteenth time.

This season's meetings have been most successful and well attended. Mr. Frank Johnson delighted his hearers with a full-length dramatic recital of " Richard Doubledick.' In January Mr. Will Kent, the well-known lecturer and author, gave a very interesting lecture on Dickens's interest in London.

The February meeting was a " Red Letter Day " for the Branch, inasmuch as it celebrated its twenty-first birthday. This should have been in 1944, but war conditions prevented it.

Mr. and Mrs. Fullwood were given a rousing reception and the President was presented with a book, handsomely bound, by Miss Jane Davies, containing Dickens quotations and sketches contributed by about fifty members of the Branch, as a token of their esteem and gratitude for his twenty-one years of enthusiastic work. Mr. Fullwood then gave a short history of the Branch, from the days of its inception in 1923, and scenes from *Bleak House* were given by members. At the March meeting, Mr. John Greaves gave an afternoon of brilliant character studies, in which he held his audience enthralled.

E. L.

THE DICKENSIAN TABARD PLAYERS

To celebrate the 133rd anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens, The Dickensian Tabard Players presented scenes from *Oliver Twist* in the courtyard of the " George Inn," Borough followed by a short journey to the Charles Dickens School, where, on their behalf, His Worship the Mayor of Southwark, placed a wreath of laurels on the bust of Dickens. Further scenes were given including the drugging of Bill Sikes by Nancy. This year marked the twentieth successive occasion on which the Players have paid tribute to the memory of The Novelist.

THE BOOK FOR STUDY

SEASON 1945-46

LITTLE DORRIT

OBITUARY

HENRY SMETHAM.

We greatly regret to record the passing of the Grand Old Man of the Rochester Branch, Mr. Henry Smetham, who died on April 19th in his ninety-first year, after a life of seventy years' usefulness to the Medway towns he loved so well. He was an original member of the Branch which he helped to form in 1904, and was its honoured President for many years, at first in association with the late Mrs. Amy Evans Prall. He was identified with a very great deal of public work in his adopted Strood, of which he published a history in 1899 and which ran into several editions. He followed this by a Life of Charles Roach Smith, the antiquary. The papers he contributed to the local press on the churches of the neighbourhood were later collected and published in several volumes entitled "Rambles Round Churches."

His love for and knowledge of Dickens was boundless, as was his enthusiasm for the Branch. His endearing personality will leave a sad gap amongst the members for a long while to come. L.C.S.

W. P. WOOLIAMS.

The Balham Branch suffers a great loss in the death of W. P. Wooliams. He joined it shortly after its inauguration, later served on the committee and remained to the end a devoted member, contributing many interesting papers.

Life was not very easy for him. Ill-health dogged him and he found the law a hard master for the lay servitor, as Dickens knew it was. When, for the last time, he left an office in Bedford Row where he had worked for fifty-five years, he had less than three months to live. Yet, although he was well past the three score and ten, there was no prospect of a pension. The period of leisured retirement was sadly denied him. Nevertheless he was always cheerful, uncomplaining and kind.

If he was known to only a small circle, a degree of oblivion was the price he paid for his conscientiousness. The call of duty always was paramount over the path of pleasure. I am, however, pleased to say that when I saw him last—in St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington—it was evident that the welcome accorded to his literary efforts by the editor of *The Dickensian* gave him much pleasure for:

"The labour we delight in physics pain."

In his fine fidelity and quiet courage Wooliams reminded his Dickensian friends of some of the novelist's most admired characters, such as Joe Gargery and Tom Pinch.

WM. KENT.

JAMES VERDEN.

The Lancaster Branch mourns the passing of James Verden, an original member who served on its first committee, was Hon. Secretary from 1934-37, and later Vice-President and President. Mr. Verden bequeathed his library of nearly eight thousand volumes to the Lancaster Public Library. T.C.H.

. . . . . .

The Honorary Secretary wishes gratefully to record that Mr. Verden bequeathed twenty-five pounds to The Dickens Fellowship.

. . . . . .

We also regret to record the passing of:

Mrs. Jones	*Headquarters.*
Mr. John Keast	*Bromley.*
Mr. W. H. Saxby	*Christchurch, N.Z.*
Miss C. Walker-Inglis	*Edinburgh.*

DICKENSIANA OF THE QUARTER

"Bed and Sometimes Breakfast." An anthology of Landladies compiled by Philip Owens. Sylvan Press, 10/6.

"A Christmas Carol." (Lionel Barrymoore's *Scrooge*). "Life" (U.S.A.), 25th December.

"Dickens on the Moscow Stage." "Soviet War News Weekly," 11th January.

"Reading for War-time," by Lord Elton. "The Queen," 21st March.

"A Defence of Little Nell," by Lennox Robinson. "Irish Times," 31st March.

"Farewell to Mugby Junction," by Ivor Brown. "The Observer," 8th April.

"From Bumbledom to National Service." "Law Journal," 14th April.

"Charles Dickens and his Wine Cellar." Dame Una Pope-Hennessy. Wine and Food. Spring, March.